THE ADVENTURES OF HERR BABY

MRS. MOLESWORTH

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THE ADVENTURES

OF

HERR BABY

By Mrs. MOLESWORTH

AUTHOR OF 'CARROTS,' 'US,' ETC.

'I have a boy of five years old:
His face is fair and fresh to see.'

WORDSWORTH

ILLUSTRATED BY WALTER CRANE

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THE ADVENTURES OF HERR BABY

CHAPTER I.

FOUR YEARS OLD

"I was four yesterday; when I'm quite old
I'll have a cricket-ball made of pure gold;
I'll never stand up to show that I'm grown;
I'll go at liberty upstairs or down."

He trotted upstairs. Perhaps trotting is not quite the right word, but I can't find a better. It wasn't at all like a horse or pony trotting, for he went one foot at a time, right foot first, and when right foot was safely landed on a step, up came left foot and the rest of Baby himself after right foot. It took a good while, but Baby didn't mind. He used to think a good deal while he was going up and down stairs, and it was not his way to be often in a hurry. There was one thing he could *not* bear, and that was any one trying to carry him upstairs. Oh, that did vex

him! His face used to get quite red, right up to the roots of his curly hair, and down to the edge of the big collar of his sailor suit, for he had been put into sailor suits last Christmas, and, if the person who was lifting him up didn't let go all at once, Baby would begin to wriggle. He was really clever at wriggling; even if you knew his way it was not easy to hold him, and with any one that didn't know his way he could get off in half a minute.

But this time there was no one about, and Baby stumped on—yes *that* is a better word—Baby stumped on, or up, "wifout nobody teasing." His face was grave, very grave, for inside the little house of which his two blue eyes were the windows, a great deal of work was going on. He was busy wondering about, and trying to understand, some of the strange news he had heard downstairs in the drawing-room.

"Over the sea," he said to himself. "Him would like to see the sea. Auntie said over the sea in a boat, a werry big boat. Him wonders how big."

And his mind went back to the biggest boat he had ever seen, which was in the toy-shop at Brookton, when he had gone with his mother to be fitted for new boots. But even that wouldn't be big enough. Mother, and auntie, and grandfather, and Celia, and

Fritz, and Denny, and cook, and Lisa, and Thomas and Jones, and the other servants, and the horses, and—and—— Baby stopped to take breath inside, for though he had not been speaking aloud he felt quite choked with all the names coming so fast. "And pussy, and the calanies, and the Bully, and Fritz's dormice, oh no, them *couldn't* all get in." Perhaps if Baby doubled up his legs underneath he might squeeze himself in, but that would be no good, he couldn't go sailing, sailing all over the sea by himself, like the old woman in "Harry's Nursery Songs," who went sailing, sailing, up in a basket, "seventy times as high as the moon." Oh no, even that boat wouldn't be big enough. They must have one as big as—and Baby stopped to look round. But just then a shout from inside the nursery made him wake up, for he had got to the last little stair before the top landing, and again right foot and half Baby, followed by left foot and the other half Baby, stumped on their way.

They pulled up—right foot and left foot, with Baby's solemn face top of all—at the nursery door. It was shut. Now one of the things Baby liked to do for himself was to open doors, and now and then he could manage it very well. But, alas, the nursery

lock was too high up for him to get a good hold of it He pulled, and pushed, and got quite red, all for no use. Worse than that, the pushing and pulling were heard inside. Some one came forward and opened the door, nearly knocking poor Baby over.

"Ach, Herr Baby, mine child, why you not say when you come?" Lisa cried out. Lisa was Baby's nurse. Her face was rosy and round, and she looked very kind. She would have liked to pick him up to make sure he had got no knocks, but she knew too well that would not do. So all she could do was to say again—

"Mine child—ach, Herr Baby!"

Baby did not take any notice.

"Zeally," he said coolly, "ganfather must do somesing to zem locks. Zem is all most dedful 'tiff."

Lisa smiled to herself. She was used to Baby's ways.

"Herr Baby shall grow tall some day," she said. "Zen him can open doors."

Lisa's talking was nearly as funny as Baby's, and, indeed, I rather think that hers had made his all the funnier. But, any way, they understood each other. He was thinking over what she had said, when a

scream from the nursery made them both turn round in a hurry.

"O Lisa, O Baby, come in quick, do. Peepy-Snoozle has got out of the cage, and he'll be out at the door in another moment. Quick, quick, come in and shut the door."

Lisa and Baby did not wait to be twice told. Inside the nursery there was a great flurry. Celia, Fritz, and Denny were all there crawling over the floor and screaming at each other.

"I have him! there—oh, now that's too bad. Fritz, you frightened him away again," called out Celia.

"*Me* frighten him away! Why he knows me ever so much better than you girls," said Fritz.

"He just doesn't then," said Denny with triumph, "for here he is safe in my apron."

But she had hardly said the words when she gave a little scream. "He's off again, oh quick, Baby, quick, catch him."

How Baby did it, I can't tell. His hands seemed too small to catch anything, even a dormouse. But catch the truant he did, and very proud Baby looked when he held up his two little fists, which he had made into a "mouse-trap" *really*, for the occasion,

with Peepy-Snoozle's "coxy" little head and bright beady eyes poking out at the top.

"Oh look, look, Baby's made Peepy-Snoozle into 'the parson in the pulpit that couldn't say his prayers,'" cried Denny, dancing about.

"All the same, he'd better go back into his cage,' said Fritz, who had a right to be heard, as he was the master and owner of the dormice. "Come along, Baby, poke him in."

Baby was busy kissing and petting Peepy-Snoozle by this time, for, though he did not approve of much of that sort of thing for himself, he was very fond of petting little animals, who were not little boys. And to tell the truth, it was not often he got a chance of petting his big brother's dormice. It was quite pretty to see the way he kissed Peepy-Snoozle's soft brown head, especially his nose, stroking it gently against his own smooth cheeks and chattering to the little creature.

"Dear little darling. Sweet little denkle darling," he said. "Him would like to have a house all full of Peepy-'noozles, zem is so sweet and soft."

"Wouldn't you like a coat made of their skins?" said Denny. "Think how soft that would be."

"No, sairtin him wouldn't," said Baby. "Him

"Oh look, look, Baby's made Peepy-Snoozle into 'the parson in the pulpit that couldn't say his prayers,'" cried Denny.—P. 6.

There's different kinds of sharps—there's different kinds of everything."

Baby looked at her gravely. He had his own way of defending himself.

"Werry well. If him's a goose him won't talk to you, and him won't tell you somesing *werry* funny and dedful bootiful that him heard in the 'groind room."

All eyes were turned on Baby.

"Oh, do tell us, Baby darling, *do* tell us," said Celia and Denny.

Fritz gave Baby a friendly pat on the back.

"You'll tell *me*, old fellow, won't you?" he said. Baby looked at him.

"Yes," he said at last; "him will tell you, 'cos you let him have Peepy-'noozle, and 'cos you doesn't call him a goose—like *girls* does. I'll whister in your ear, Fritz, if you'll bend down."

But Celia thought this was too bad.

"*I* didn't call you a goose, Baby," she said. "I think you might tell me too."

"And I'll promise never to call you a goose again if you'll tell *me*," said Denny.

Baby had a great soul. It was beneath him to take a mean revenge, he felt, especially on a *girl!* So he shut his little mouth tightly, knit his little

brows, and thought it over for a moment or two. Then his face cleared.

"Him *will* tell you all—all you children," he said at last, "but it's werry long and dedful wonderful, and you mustn't inrumpt him. P'omise?"

"Promise," shouted the three.

"Well then, litsen. We's all goin' away—zeally away—over the sea—dedful far. As far as the sky, p'raps."

"In a balloon?" said Denny, whose tongue wouldn't keep still even though she was very much interested in the news.

"No, in a boat," replied Baby, forgetting to notice that this was an "inrumption," "in a werry 'normous boat. All's going. Him was looking for 'tamps in mother's basket of teared letters under the little table, and mother and ganfather and auntie didn't know him were there, and ganfather said to mother somesing him couldn't understand—somesing about *thit* house, and mother said, yes, 'twould be a werry good thing to go away 'fore the cold weather comed, and the children would be p'eased. And auntie said she would like to tell the children, but——"

Another "inrumption." This time from Fritz.

"Baby, stop a minute," he exclaimed. "Celia,

Denny—Baby's too little to understand, but," and here Fritz's round chubby face got very red, "don't you think we've no right to let him tell, if it's something mother means to tell us herself? She didn't know Baby was there—he said so."

But before Celia or Denny could answer, Baby turned upon Fritz.

"Him *tolded* you not to inrumpt," he said, with supreme contempt. "If you would litsen you would see. Mother *did* know him was there at the ending, for auntie said she'd like to tell the children—that's you, and Denny and Celia—but him comed out from the little table and said *him* would like to tell the children hisself. And mother were dedful surprised, and so was ganfather and auntie. And then they all bursted out laughing and told him lots of things—about going in the railway, and in a 'normous boat to that other country, where there's cows to pull the carts, and all the people talk lubbish-talk, like Lisa when she's cross. And zen, and zen, him comed upstairs to tell you."

Baby looked round triumphantly. Celia and Fritz and Denny looked first at him and then at each other. This was wonderful news—almost too wonderful to be true.

"We must be going to Italy or somewhere like that," said Celia. "How lovely! I wonder why they didn't tell us before?"

"Italy," repeated Denny, "that's the country like a boot, isn't it? I do hope there won't be any snakes. I'd rather far stay at home than go where there's snakes."

"*I* wouldn't," said Fritz, grandly. "I'd like to go to India or Africa, or any of those places where there's lots of lions and tigers and snakes, and anything you like. Give me a good revolver and *you'd* see."

"Don't talk nonsense, Fritz," said Celia. "You're far too little a boy for shooting and guns and all that. It's setting a bad example to Baby to talk that boasting way, and it's very silly too."

"Indeed, miss. Much obliged to you, miss," said Fritz. "I'd only just like to know, miss, who it was came to my room the other night and was sure she heard robbers, and begged Fritz to peep behind the swing-door in the long passage. And 'oh,' said this person, 'I do so wish you had a gun that you could point at them to frighten them away.' Fritz wasn't such a very little boy just then."

Celia's face got rather red, and she looked as if

she was going to get angry, but at that moment, happily, Lisa appeared with the tray for the nursery tea. She had left the room when the dormouse was caught, so she had not heard the wonderful news, and it had all to be told over again. She smiled and seemed pleased, but not as surprised as the children expected.

"Why, aren't you surprised, Lisa?" said the children. "Did you know before? Why didn't you tell us?"

Lisa shook her head and looked very wise.

"What country are we going to? Can you tell us that?" said Celia.

"Is it to your country? Is it to what you call Dutchland?" said Fritz. "I think it's an awfully queer thing that countries can't be called by the same names everywhere. It makes geography ever so much harder. We've got to call the people that live in Holland Dutch, and they call themselves—oh, I don't know what they call themselves——"

"Hollanders," said Lisa.

"Hollanders!" repeated Fritz. "Well, that's a sensible sort of name for people that live in Holland. But *we've* got to call them Dutch; and then, to make it more muddled still, Lisa calls her country Dutchland, and the people Dutch, and *we* call them German

I think it's very stupid. If I was to make geography I wouldn't do it that way."

"What's jography?" said Baby.

"Knowing all about all the countries and all the places in the world," said Denny.

"Him wants to learn that," said Baby.

"Oh, you're *far* too little!" said Denny. "*I* only began it last year. Oh, you're ever so much too little!"

"Him's not too little to go in the 'normous boat to *see* all zem countlies," said Baby, valiantly. "Him *will* learn jography."

"That's right, Baby," said Fritz. "Stick up for yourself. You'll be a great deal bigger than Denny some day."

Denny was getting ready an answer when Lisa, who knew pretty well the signs of war between Fritz and Denny, called to all the children to come to tea; and as both Fritz and Denny were great hands at bread and butter, they forgot to quarrel, and began pulling their chairs in to the table, and in a few minutes all four were busy at work.

What a pretty sight, and what a pleasant thing a nursery tea is! when the children, that is to say, are sweet-faced and smiling, with clean pinafores,

and clean hands, and gentle voices ; not leaning over the table, knocking over cups, and snatching rudely at the "butteriest" pieces of bread and butter, and making digs at the sugar when nurse is not looking. *That* kind of nursery tea is not to my mind, and not at all the kind to which I am always delighted to receive an invitation, written in very round, very black letters, on very small sheets of paper. The nursery teas in Baby's nursery were not always *quite* what I like to see them, for Celia, Fritz, and Denny, and Baby too, had their tiresome days as well as their pleasant ones, and though they meant to be good to each other, they did not *always* do just what they meant, or really wished, at the bottom of their hearts. But to-day all the little storms were forgotten in the great news, and all the faces looked bright and eager, though just at first not much was said, for when children are hungry of course they can't chatter quite so fast, and all the four tongues were silent till at least one cup of tea, and perhaps three or four slices of bread and butter each—just as a beginning, you know—had disappeared.

Then said Celia,—

"Lisa, do tell us if you know what sort of a place we're going to."

"Cows pulls carts there," observed Baby; "and—and—what was the 'nother thing? We'll have frogses for dinner."

"Baby!" said the others, "*what* nonsense!"

"'Tisn't nonsense. Ganfather said Thomas and Dones wouldn't go 'cos they was fightened of frogses for dinner. *Him* doesn't care—frogses tastes werry good."

"How do you know? You've never tasted them." said Fritz.

"Ganfather said zem was werry good."

"Grandfather was joking," said Celia. "I've often heard him laugh at people that way. It's just nonsense—Thomas and Jones don't know any better. Do they eat frogs in your country, Lisa?"

"In mine country, Fräulein Célie?" said Lisa, looking rather vexed. "No indeed. Man eats goot, most goot tings, in mine country. Say, Herr Baby—Herr Baby knows what goot tings Lisa would give him in her country."

"Yes," said Baby, "such good tings. Tocolate and cakes—lots—and bootiful soup, all sweet, not like salty soup. Him would like werry much to go to Lisa's countly."

"Do cows pull carts in your country, Lisa?" asked Denny.

"Some parts. Not where mine family lives," said Lisa. "No, Fräulein Denny, it's not to mine country we're going. Mine country is it colt, so colt; and your lady mamma and your lady auntie they want to go where it is warm, so warm, and sun all winter."

"*I* should like that too," said Celia, "I hate winter."

"That's 'cos you're a girl," said Fritz; "you crumple yourself up by the fire and sit shivering—no wonder you're cold. You should come out skating like Denny, and then you'd get warm."

"Denny's a girl too. You said it was because I was a girl," said Celia.

"Well, she's not as silly as some girls, any way," said Fritz, rather "put down."

Baby was sitting silent. He had made an end of two cups of tea and five pieces of bread and butter.

He was not, therefore, *quite* so hungry as he had been at the beginning, but still he was a long way off having made what was called in the nursery a "good tea." Something was on his mind. He sat with one arm propped on the table, and his round head leaning on his hand, while the other held the piece of bread and butter—butter downwards, of course—

He sat with one arm propped on the table and his round head leaning on his hand, while the other held the piece of bread and butter — butter downwards, of course. —P. 16.

which had been on its way to his mouth when his brown study had come over him.

"Herr Baby," said Lisa, "eat, mine child."

Baby took no notice.

"What has he then?" said Lisa, who was very easily frightened about her dear Herr Baby. "Can he be ill? He eats not."

"Ill," said Celia. "No fear, Lisa. He's had ever so much bread and butter. Don't you want any more, Baby? What are you thinking about? We're going to have honey on our last pieces to-night, aren't we, Lisa? For a treat, you know, because of the news of going away."

Celia wanted the honey because she was very fond of it; but besides that, she thought it would wake Baby out of his brown study to hear about it, for he was very fond of it too.

He did catch the word, for he turned his blue eyes gravely on Celia.

"Honey's werry good," he said, "but him's not at his last piece yet. Him doesn't sink he'll *ever* be at his last piece to-night; him's had to stop eating for he's so dedful busy in him's head."

"Poor little man, have you got a pain in your head?" said his sister, kindly. "Is that what you mean?"

"No, no," said Baby, softly shaking his head, "no pain. It's only busy sinking."

"What about?" said all the children.

Baby sat straight up.

"Children," he said, "him zeally can't eat, sinking of what a dedful packing there'll be. All of every-sing. Him zeally sinks it would be best to begin to-night."

At this moment the door opened. It was mother. She often came up to the nursery at tea-time, and

> "When the children had been good;
> That is, be it understood,
> Good at meal times, good at play,"

I need hardly say, they were very, very pleased to see her. Indeed there were times even when they were glad to see her face at the door when they *hadn't* been very good, for somehow she had a way of putting things right again, and making them feel both how wrong and how *silly* it is to be cross and quarrelsome, that nobody else had. And she would just help the kind words out without seeming to do so, and take away that sore, horrid feeling that one *can't* be good, even though one is longing so to be happy and friendly again.

But this evening there had been nothing worse than a little squabbling; the children all greeted mother merrily, only Baby still looked rather solemn.

CHAPTER II.

INSIDE A TRUNK

"For girls are as silly as spoons, dears,
And boys are as jolly as bricks.
* * * *
Oh Mammy, *you* tell us a story !—
They won't hear a word that *I* say."

MOTHER, mother!" they all cried with one voice, and the three big ones jumped up and ran to her, all pulling her at once.

"Mother, mother, do sit down in the rocking-chair and look comfortable," said Fritz.

"There's still some tea. You'll have a cup of *our* tea, won't you, mother?" said Celia.

"And some bread and honey," said Denny.

"It won't spoil your afternoon tea; don't say it will," said all together, for nothing would ever make them believe that when mother came up to the

nursery at tea-time it could be allowed that she should not have a share of whatever there was.

"Such a good thing we had honey to-night," said Celia, who was busy cutting a very dainty piece of bread and butter. "We persuaded Lisa to give it us *extra*, you know, mother, because of the news. And, oh, mother, what do you think Baby says? he——"

"Baby! what is the matter with him?" interrupted mother.

They all turned to look at him. Poor Baby, he had set to work to get down from his chair to run to mother with the others, but the chair was high and Baby was short, and Lisa, who had gone to the cupboard for a fresh cup and saucer for "madame," as she called the children's mother, had not noticed the trouble Herr Baby had got himself into. One little leg and a part of his body were stuck fast in the open space between the bars at the back, his head had somehow got under the arm of the chair, and could not be got out again without help. And Baby was far too proud to call out for help as long as there was a chance of his doing without it. But he really was in a very uncomfortable state, and it was a wonder that the chair, which was a light wicker one, had not toppled over with the queer way in which he was

hanging. They got him out at last; his face was very red, and I *think* the tears had been very near coming, but he choked them down, and looking up gravely he said to his mother,—

"Him's chair is getting too small. Him hasn't room to turn."

"Is it really?" said his mother, quite gravely too. She saw that Celia and Fritz were ready to burst out laughing at poor Baby, and she didn't want them to do so, for Baby had really been very brave, and now when he was trying hard not to cry it would have been too bad to laugh at him. "Is it really?" she said. "I must see about it, and if it is too small we must get you another."

"Him doesn't want you to pack up *that* chair," said Baby again, giving himself a sort of shake, as if to make sure that his head, and his legs, and all the rest of him, were in their proper places after being so turned about and twisted by his struggles in the chair.

"He's quite in a fuss about packing," said Celia; "that's what I was going to tell you, mother. He stopped in the middle of his tea to think about it, and he said he thought we'd better begin to-night."

"Yes," said Baby. "There's such *lots* to pack.

All our toys, and the labbits, and the mouses, and the horses, and the fireplaces, and the tables, and the cups, and the saucers," his eyes wandering round the room as he went on with his list. "Him thinks we'll need *lots* of boats to go in."

"And two or three railway trains all to ourselves," said mother.

Baby looked up at her gravely. He could not make out if mother was in fun or earnest. His little puzzled face made mother draw him to her and give him a kiss.

"It's a shame to talk nonsense to such a serious little man," she said. "Don't trouble yourself about the packing, Baby dear. Don't you know grandfather, and auntie, and I have had lots of packings to do in our lives? Why, we had to pack up *two* houses when we came away from India, and that was much much farther away than where we're going now! And you were *such* a tiny baby then—it was very much harder, for mother was very very sad, and she never thought you would grow to be a big strong boy like what you are now."

"Was that when——" began thoughtless Denny, but Fritz gave her a tug.

"You *know* it makes mother unhappy to talk

about that time," he whispered; but mother heard him.

"No, Fritz," she said; "I don't mind Denny thinking about it. I am so glad to have all of you, dears, happy and good, that my sorrow is not so bad as it was. And I am so glad you and Celia can remember your father. Poor Baby—*he* can't remember him," she said, softly stroking Baby's face.

"'Cos he went to Heaven when him was so little," said Baby. Then he put his arms round mother's neck. "Him and Fritz will soon grow big, and be werry good to mother," he said. "And ganfather and auntie are werry good to mother, isn't they?" he added.

"Yes indeed," said mother; "and to all of you too. What would we do without grandfather and auntie?"

"Some poor little boys and girls has no mothers and ganfathers, and no stockings and shoes, and no *nothings*," said Baby solemnly.

"There's *some* things I shouldn't mind not having," said Fritz; "I shouldn't mind having no lessons."

"O Fritz," said his sisters; "what a lazy boy you are!"

"No, I'm just *not* lazy. I'm awfully fond of doing *everything*—I don't even mind if it's a hard thing, so

long as it isn't anything in books," said Fritz, sturdily. "Some people's made one way, and some's made another, and I'm made the way of not liking books."

"I wonder what Baby will say to books," said mother, smiling.

"Is jography in books," said Baby. "Him wants to learn jography."

"*I* think it's awfully stupid," said Denny. "I'm sure you won't like it once you begin. Did *you* like lessons when you were little, mother?"

"Yes, I'm sure mother did," said Fritz. "People's fathers and mothers were always far gooder than their children are. I've noticed that. If ever big people tell you about when they were little, it's always about how good they were. And they say always, 'Dear me, how happy children should be nowadays; *we* were never allowed to do so and so when *we* were little.' That's the way old Mrs. Nesbitt always talks, isn't it mother? I wonder if it's true. If people keep getting naughtier than their fathers and mothers were, the world will get *very* naughty some day. *Is* it true?"

"I think it's true that children get to be more spoilt," said Denny in a low voice. "Just look how

Baby's clambering all over mother! O Baby, you nearly knocked over mother's cup! *I* never was allowed to do like that when *I* was a little girl."

Everybody burst out laughing—even mother—but Denny had the good quality of not minding being laughed at.

"Was the tea nice, and the bread and butter and honey?" she said eagerly, as mother rose to put the empty cup in a place of safety.

"Very nice, thank you," said mother. "But I must go, dears. I have a good many things to talk about with grandfather and auntie."

"Packing?" said Baby.

"How you do go on about packing!" said Denny. "Of course mother's not going to pack to-night."

Baby's face fell.

"Him does so want to begin packing," he said dolefully. "'Appose we forgottened somesing, and we was over the sea!"

"Well, I must talk about it all, and write down all we have to take," said mother. "So I must go to auntie now."

"Oh, not yet, not yet. Just five minutes more!" cried the children. "And, mother," said Celia, "you've not answered my question. *Is* it true that children

used to be so much better long ago? Were you never naughty?"

"Sometimes," said mother, smiling.

"Oh, I'm so glad!" said Celia. "Often, mother? I do hope you were often naughty. Do tell us a story about something naughty you did when you were little. You know it would be a good lesson for us. It would show us how awfully good one may learn to be, for, you know, you're awfully good now."

"Yes, of course you are," said Fritz and Denny.

"Mother's *dedfully* good," said Baby, poking up his face from her knee where he had again perched himself, to kiss her. "Do tell him one story of when you was a little girl, mother."

Mother's face seemed for a minute rather puzzled. Then it suddenly cleared up.

"I will tell you a very little story," she said; "it really is a very little story, but it is as long as I have time for just now, and it may amuse you. Baby's packing put it in my head."

"Is it about when you were a little girl, mother?" interrupted Denny.

"Yes. Well, when I was a little girl, I had no mother."

The elder children nodded their heads. But Baby, to whom it was a new idea, shook his sadly.

"Zat was a gate pity," he said. "Poor mother to have no mother. Had you no shoes and stockings, and nothing nice to eat?"

"You sill——" began Denny, but mother stopped her.

"Oh yes," she said, "I had shoes and stockings, and everything I wanted, for I had a very kind father. You know how kind grandfather is? And I had a kind sister whom you know too. But when I was a little girl, my sister was not herself *very* big, and she had a great deal to do *for* a not very big girl, you know. There were our brothers, for we had several, and though they were generally away at school there seemed always something to do for them—letters to write to them, if there was nothing else—and then, in the holidays, there were all their new shirts, and stockings, and things to get to take back to school. Helen seemed always busy. She had been at school too, before your grandfather came back from India, for five years, bringing me with him, quite a wee little girl of four. And Helen was so happy to be with us again, that she begged not to go back to school, and, as she was really very

well on for her age, grandfather let her stay at home."

"There, you see," whispered Celia, nudging Fritz. "It's beginning—it always does—you hear how awfully good auntie was."

Mother went on quietly. If she heard what Celia said she took no notice. "Grandfather let her stay at home and have lessons there. She had a great many lessons to learn for her age besides those that one learns out of books. She had to learn to be very active, and very thoughtful, and, above all, very patient. For the little sister she had to take care of was, I am afraid, a very spoilt little girl when she first came home. Grandfather had spoiled her without meaning it; he was so sorry for her because she had no mother, and Helen was so sorry for her too, that it was rather difficult for her not to spoil her as well."

Here Baby himself "inrumpted."

"Him doesn't understand," he said. "Who *were* that little girl? Him wants a story about mother when *her* was a little girl;" and the corners of his mouth went down, and his eyes grew dewy-looking, in a very sad way.

"Poor Baby," said mother. "I'll try and tell it

more plainly. *I* was that little girl, and auntie was my sister Helen. I must get on with my little story. I was forgetting that Baby would not quite understand. Well, one day to my great delight, Helen told me that grandfather was going to take her and me and the two brothers, who were then at home, to spend Christmas with one of our aunts in London. This aunt had children too, and though I had never seen them Helen told me they were very nice, for she knew them well, as she used to go there for her holidays before we came home. She told me most about a little girl called Lilly, who was just about my age. I had never had a little friend of my own age, and I was always talking and thinking about how nice it would be, and I was quite vexed with Helen because she would not begin to pack up at once. I was always teasing her to know what trunks we should take, and if all my dolls might go, and I am sure poor Helen often wished she had not told me anything about it till the very day before. I got in the way of going up to the big attic where the trunks were kept, and of looking at them and wondering which would go, and wishing Helen would let me have one all for myself and my dolls and their things. There was one trunk which took my fancy

There was one trunk which took my fancy more than all the others.—P. 30.

more than all the others. It was an old-fashioned trunk, but it must have been a very good one, for it shut with a sort of spring, and inside it had several divisions, some with little lids of their own, and I used to think how nice it would be for me, I could put all my dolls in so beautifully, and each would have a kind of house for itself. I don't remember how I managed to get it open, perhaps it had been a little open when I first began my visits to the attic, for the lid was very heavy, and I was neither big nor strong for my age. But it *was* open, and it stayed so, for no one else ever went up to the attic but I. The other people in the house were too busy, and no one would have thought there was anything amusing in looking at empty trunks in a row. But I went up to the attic day after day. I climbed up the narrow staircase as soon as I had had my breakfast, and stayed there till I heard my nurse calling me to get ready to go out, or to come to my lessons, for I was beginning to learn to read, and I used to have a little lesson every day. And at last one day I said to my sister,

"'Helen, may I have the big trunk with the little cupboards in it for *my* trunk?'

"Helen was busy at the time, and I don't think

she heard exactly what I said. She answered me hurriedly that she would see about it afterwards. But I went on teasing.

"'May I begin putting Marietta and Lady Regina into the little cupboards inside?' I said.

"'Oh yes, I daresay you can if you like,' said Helen. She told me afterwards that when I spoke of cupboards she never thought I meant a trunk, she thought I was speaking of some of the nursery cupboards.

"It was just bed-time then, too late for me to go to the attic, for I knew there was no chance of my getting leave to go up there with a candle. But I fell asleep with my head full of how nicely I could put the dolls into the trunk, each with her clothes beside her, and the very first thing the next morning I got them all together and I mounted up to the attic. I had never told nurse about my going up there. Once or twice, perhaps, she had seen me coming down the stair, but very likely she had thought I had only been a little way up to look out of a window there was there. I don't know why I didn't tell her, perhaps I was afraid of her stopping my going. I waited till she was busy about her work, fetching coals and so on, and then I trotted off with Lady

Regina under one arm and Marietta under the other, and a bundle of their clothes tied up in my pinafore before, to make my way upstairs to the delightful trunk. It was open as usual, and after putting my dolls and bundles down on the floor, I managed to lift out the two top trays. One of them was much larger than the other, and it was in what I called the cupboards below the smaller one that I settled to put Regina and Marietta. There were two of these little cupboards, and each had a lid. They would just do beautifully. Under the larger tray there was just one big space without a lid, 'just a hole,' I called it. I went on for a little time, laying in some of the clothes first to make a nice soft place for the dolls to lie on, but I soon got tired. It was so very far to reach over, for the outside edges of the box were high, higher of course than the *inside* divisions, for the trays I had taken out, which lay on the top of the lower spaces, were a good depth, and there had been no division between them. It came into my head that it would be much easier if I were to get into the box myself—I could stand in the big hole, as I called it, and reach over to the little divisions where I wanted to put the dolls, and it would be far less tiring than trying to reach over from the outside. So I

clambered in—it was not very difficult—and when I found myself really inside the trunk I was so pleased that I sat down cross-legged, like a little Turk, to take a rest before going on with what I called my packing. But sitting still for long was not in my way—I soon jumped up again, meaning to reach over for Lady Regina, who was lying on the floor beside the trunk, but, how it happened I cannot tell, I suppose I somehow caught the tapes which fastened the lid; any way down it came! It did not hurt me much, for I had not had time to stretch out my head, and the weight fell mostly on my shoulders, sideways as it were, and before I knew what had happened I found myself doubled up somehow in my hole, with the heavy lid on the top of me, all in the dark, except a little line of light round the edge, for the lid had not shut quite down; the hasp of the lock—as the little sticking-out piece is called—had caught in the fall, and was wedged into a wrong place. So, luckily for me, there was still a space for some air to come in, and a little light, though very little. I was dreadfully frightened at first; then I began to get over my fright a little, and to struggle to get out. Of course my first idea was to try to push up the lid with my head and shoulders; I remember the feeling of it pushing

back upon me—the dreadful feeling that I couldn't move it, that I was shut up there and couldn't get out! I was too little to understand all at once that there could be any danger, that I might perhaps be suffocated—that means choked, Baby—for want of air; or that I might really be hurt by being so cramped and doubled up. And really there was not much danger; if I had been older I should have been more frightened than there was really any reason to be. But I was big enough to begin very quickly to get very angry and impatient. I had never in all my life been forced to do anything I disliked; often and often my nurse, and sometimes Helen, had begged me to try to sit still for a minute or two, but I never would. And now the lesson of having to give in to something much worse than sitting still in my nice little chair by the nursery fire, or standing still for two minutes while a new frock was tried on, had to be learnt! There was no getting rid of it; I kicked and I pushed, it was no use; the strong heavy lid which had been to India and back two or three times would not move the least bit. I tried to poke out my fingers through the little space that was left, but I could not find the lock, and it was a good thing I did not, for if I had touched the hasp, most likely the lid would

have fallen quite into its place, crushing my poor little fingers, and shutting me in without any air at all. At last I thought of another plan. I set to work screaming.

"'Nurse, nurse, Nelly, oh Nelly,' I cried, and at last I shouted, 'Papa, *Papa*, PAPA,' at the top of my voice. But it was no use! Most children would have begun screaming at the very first. But I was not a *frightened* child, and I was very proud. I did not want any one to find me shut up in a box like that, besides, they would be sure to stop my ever coming up to the attic again. So it was not till I had tired myself out with trying to push up the lid that I set to work to screaming, and that made it all the more provoking that my calls brought no one. At last I got so out of patience that I set to work again kicking for no use at all, but just because I was so angry. I kicked and screamed, and at last I burst into tears and *roared*. Then I caught sight, through the chink, of Lady Regina's blue dress, where the doll was lying on the floor near the trunk.

"'Nasty Regina,' I shouted, 'nasty, ugly Regina. You are lying there as if there was nothing the matter, and it was all for you I came up here. I

hate dolls—they never do nothing. If you were a little dog you'd go and bark, and then somebody would come and let me out.'

"Then I went on crying and sobbing till I was perfectly tired, and then what do you think I did? Though I was so uncomfortable, all crushed up into a little ball, I went to sleep! I went to sleep as soundly as if I had been in my own little bed, and afterwards I found, from what they told me, that I must have slept quite two hours. When I woke up I could not think where I was. I felt so stiff and sore, and when I tried to stretch myself out I could not, and then I remembered where I was! It seemed quite dark; I wondered if it was night, till I noticed the little chink of light at the edge of the lid, and then I began to cry again, but not so wildly as before. All of a sudden I thought I heard a sound—some one was coming upstairs! and then I heard voices.

"'Fallen out of the window,' one said. 'Oh no, nurse, she *couldn't!* She could never get through.'

"But yet the person seemed to be looking out of the window all the same, for I heard them opening and shutting it. And then I called out again.

"'Oh Nelly, Nelly. I'se here; I'se shut up in the big box with the cupboards.'

"They didn't hear me at first. My little voice must have sounded very faint and squeaky from out of the trunk, besides they were not half-way up the attic-stairs. So I went on crying—

"'Oh Nelly, Nelly! I'se up here. Oh Nelly, Nelly!'

"She heard me this time. Dear Nelly! I never have called to her in vain, children, in all my life. And in half a minute she had dashed up the stairs, and, guided by my voice, was kneeling down beside the trunk.

"'Little May, my poor little May,' Nelly called out; and do you know I really think she was crying too! I was—by the time Nelly and the servants who were with her had got the lid unhooked and raised, and had lifted me out—I was in floods of tears. I clung to Nelly, and told her how 'dedful' it had been, and she petted me so that I am afraid I quite forgot it was all my own fault.

"'You might have been there for hours and hours, May,' Nelly said to me, 'if it hadn't been for nurse thinking of the window on the stair. You must never go off by yourself to do things like that,' and when I told her that I had asked her and she had given me leave, she said she had not at all

known what I meant, and that I must try to remember not to tease about things once I had been told to wait. Any way I think I had got a good lesson of patience that day, and one that I never forgot, for it really is not at all a pleasant thing to be shut up in a big trunk."

Mother stopped.

Baby, who had been listening with solemn eyes, said slowly,

"Him will not pack by hisself. Him will wait till somebody can help him. It would be so dedful sad if him was to get shuttened up like poor little mother, and perhaps you'd all go away ac'oss the sea and nebber find him."

The corners of his mouth went down at this sorrowful picture, and his eyes looked as if they were beginning to think about crying. But mother and Celia set to work petting and kissing him before the tears had time to come.

"As if we would ever go across the sea without *him*," said mother.

"Why, we should never know how to do *anything* without Herr Baby," said Celia.

"Fritz and Baby will do all the fussy things in travelling—taking the tickets, and counting the

luggage, and all that—they're such big men, aren't they?" said Denny, with mischief in her twinkling green eyes.

"Now you, just mind what you're about," said Fritz, gallantly. "You'll make him cry just when mother's been comforting him up. Such stupids girls are!" he added in a lower voice.

"I really must go now," said mother, getting up from her chair. "Auntie will not know what has become of me. I have been up here, why a whole half hour, instead of five minutes!"

"Auntie will think mother's got shut up in a trunk again," said Denny, whose tongue *never* could be still for long, and at this piece of wit they all burst out laughing.

All but Herr Baby. He couldn't see that it was any laughing matter. Mother's story had sunk deep into his mind. Trunks were things to be careful of. Baby saw this clearly.

CHAPTER III.

UP IN THE MORNING EARLY

"Sweet, eager promises bind him to this,
Never to do so again."

He woke early next morning. He had so much to think of, you see. So much that even his dreams were full of all he had heard yesterday.

"Him's been d'eaming him was in the big, big, 'normous boat, and zen him d'eamed of being shuttened up in a t'unk like *poor* little mother," he confided to Denny.

He was forced to tell Denny a good many things, because they slept in the same room, and, of course, everybody knows that *whatever* mammas and nurses say, going-to-sleep-in-bed time is *the* time for talking. Waking-up-in-the-morning time is rather tempting, too, particularly in summer, when the sun comes in at the windows *so* brightly and the birds are *so* lively,

chattering away to each other, and all the world is up and about, except "*us*," who *have* to stay in bed till seven o'clock! Ah, it *is* a trial! On the whole, I don't think chattering in the mornings is so much to be found fault with as chattering at night. It is only children who are so silly as to keep themselves awake when the time for going to sleep has come. The birds and the bees, and the little lambs even, all know when that time has come, and go to sleep without any worry to themselves or other people. But children are not always so sensible. I *could* tell you a story—only I am afraid if she were to read it in this little book it would make her feel so ashamed that I should really be sorry for her, so I will not tell you her name nor where she lives—of a little girl who was promised two pounds, two whole gold pounds—fancy! if for one month she would go quietly to sleep at night when she was put to bed, and let her sister do the same; and she was to lose two shillings every night she forgot or disobeyed. Well, what do you think? at the end of two weeks the two pounds had come down already to nineteen shillings! She had forgotten already ten times, or ten and a half times—I don't quite understand how it had come to nineteen, but so it had; and at the

end of the month—no I don't think I will tell you what it had come down to. Only this will show you how much more difficult it is to get out of a bad habit than to get into a good one, for this little girl is very sweet and good in many ways, and I love her dearly—*only* she had got into this bad habit, and it was stronger, as bad habits so often are, than her real true wish to do what her mother told her.

But I have wandered away from Herr Baby, and I am afraid you won't be pleased. He was forced, I was saying, to tell Denny a good many things, because he was most with her. I don't think he would have told her as much but for that, for Denny's head was a very flighty one, and she never cared to think or talk about the same thing for long together, which was not *at all* Herr Baby's way. *He* liked to think a good deal about everything, and one thing lasted him a good while.

"Him's been d'eaming such a lot," he said to Denny this morning.

"I think dreams are very stupid," said Denny. "What's the good of them? If they made things come *real* they would be some good. Like, you know, if I was to dream somebody gave me something awfully nice, and then when I woke up I was to see

the thing on my bed, *then* dreams would be some good."

"But if zou d'eamed somesing dedful, like being shuttened up in a t'unk like *poor* little mother, *zen* it wouldn't be nice for it to come zeal," said Baby, who never forgot to look at things from both sides.

"No, of course it wouldn't. How stupid you are!" said Denny. "And how your head does run on one thing. I'm quite tired of you talking about mother being shut up in the trunk. Do talk of something else."

"Him can't talk of somesing else when him's sinking of one sing," said Baby gravely.

"Well, then don't talk at all," said Denny sharply, "and indeed I think we'd better be quiet, or Lisa will be coming in, and scolding us. It's only half-past six."

Baby did not speak for a minute or two. Then he said solemnly,

"When us goes away ac'oss the sea in the 'normous boat, him *hopes* him won't sleep in the same zoom as you any more."

"I'm sure I hope not," said Denny snappishly. There was some excuse for her this morning, she was really rather sleepy, and it is very tiresome to be

wakened up at half-past six, when one is quite inclined to sleep till half-past seven.

But Baby could not go to sleep again. His mind was still running on packing. If he could but have a *little* box of his own to pack his own treasures in, then he would be sure none would be forgotten. He did not want a *big* trunk—not one in which he could be shuttened up like mother, but just a nice little one. If mother would give him one! Stay—where had he seen one, just what he wanted, was it in the nursery or in the cupboard where Fritz kept his garden-tools and his skates, and all the big boy things which Baby too hoped to have of his own some day? No, it was not there. It must have been—yes, it was in the pantry when he went to ask James for a glass of water. Up on a shelf, high up it stood, "a tiny *sweet* little t'unk," said Herr Baby to himself, "wouldn't mother let him have it?" He would ask her this morning as soon as he saw her. Then he lay still and thought over to himself all the things he would pack in the tiny sweet little t'unk; his best Bible with his name

"Raymond Arthur Aylmer,"

in the gold letters on the back, should have the nicest corner, of course, and his "*scented* purse," as he called the Russia leather purse which grandfather had given

him on his last birthday, that would go nicely beside the Bible, and his watch that *really* ticked as long as you turned the key in it—all those things would fit in, nicely packed in "totton wool," of course, and crushy paper. The thought of it all made Baby's fingers fidget with eagerness to begin his packing. If only mother would give him the box! It must be mother's, for if it was James's he would keep it in his own room instead of up on the pantry shelf among all the glasses and cups. If Baby could just see it again he would know 'ezackly if it would do!

Baby looked about him. Everything was perfectly still, he heard no one moving about the house —Denny had said it was only half-past six.

"Denny," said Baby softly.

No reply.

"*Denny*," a very little louder.

Still no reply; but Baby, by leaning over the edge of his cot a little, could see that Denny's eyes were shut, and her nose was half buried in the pillow in the way she always turned it when she went to sleep. Denny had gone to sleep again.

"Zes," said Herr Baby to himself; "her's a'leep —her's beazing so soft."

He looked about him again; he stuck one little

warm white foot out of bed—it did feel *rather* cold; he felt more than half inclined just to cuddle himself up warm again and lie still till Lisa came to dress him. But the thought of the little t'unk was too much for him.

"Him would so like just to *see* it," he said to himself.

Then he stood right up in bed and clambered over the edge of the cot the way he had to do to get out of it by himself. He did not make much noise—not enough to waken Denny, and indeed he would not much have minded if she *had* awakened, only that perhaps she would have wanted to go too, and Baby wished just to go down to the pantry this quiet time of the morning before any one was there and take a good look by himself.

It was cold on the stair—just at the edge, that is to say, where the carpet did not cover, and where he had stepped without thinking, not being used to trotting about on bare feet, you see. But in the middle, on the carpet, it was nice and soft and warm.

"It would be dedful to be poor boys wif no shoes and stockings," he said to himself, "'cept on the carpet. Him would like to buy lots of lubly soft carpets for zem poor boys."

And he pitied the poor boys still more when he got to the back passage leading to the pantry, where there was no carpet at all, only oilcloth. He pattered along as fast as he could; there was no sound to be heard but the ticking of the clock, and Baby wondered that he had never noticed before what a loud ticking clock it was; it did not come into his head that it was very late for none of the servants to be down, for such matters were not his concern, and if he had known the truth that Denny had made a mistake of an hour, and that it was only half-past five instead of half-past six, he would not have thought much about it.

He got to the pantry at last. It was darker in here than in the passage outside, which was a disappointment. The shutters were shut, that was the reason, and when Baby looked up at them and saw how strong and barred they were, even *he* felt that it would be no use to try to open them. He climbed up on to the dresser that ran round one side of the wall to see better. Yes, there it was—the tiny, sweet, little t'unk—just as he had been fancying it. Not so very high up either. If he could but give it a little poke out he could almost reach it down—it could not be heavy, it was *such* a tiny t'unk; and, oh, if he

could carry it out to the passage, where it was light, how beautifully he could look at it! He stood up on tiptoe, and found he could almost reach it. A brush with a sticking-out handle was lying beside him. Baby took it, and found that by poking it in a little behind the box he could make it move out, and if it were moved out a very little way he could reach to lift it down. He moved it out enough, then he stretched up his two hands to lift it down—it was not very heavy, but still rather heavier than he had thought. But with the help of his curly head, which he partly rested it on, he got it out safely enough, and was just slipping it gently downwards to the dresser when *somehow* the brush handle, which he had left on the shelf, caught him or the box, he could not tell which, and, startled by the feeling of something pushing against him, Baby lost his balance and fell! Off the dresser right down on to the hard floor, which had no carpet even to make it softer, he tumbled, and the little t'unk on the top of him. What a noise it made —even in the middle of his fright Baby could not help thinking what a tremendous noise he and the box seemed to make. He lay still for a minute; luckily the box, though it had come straight after him, had fallen a little to one side, and had not hit

him. He was bruised enough by the floor already—any more bumps would have been *too* much, would they not? But the poor box itself was to be pitied; it had come open in the fall, and all that was in it had naturally tumbled out. *That* explained the noise and clatter. The box had held—indeed it had been made on purpose to hold them—two beautiful glass jugs, which had been sent to mother all the way from Italy! Baby had never seen them, because they were only used when mother and auntie wanted the dinner-table to look very nice, and of course Baby was too little ever to come down to dinner. And, alas, the beautiful jugs, so fine and thin that one could almost have thought the fairies had made them, were both broken, one of them, indeed, crushed and shivered into mere bits of glass lying about the pantry floor, and the box itself had lost its lid, for the hinges had been broken, too, in the fall.

For a minute or two Baby could not make out what had happened. He felt a little stupid with the fall, and sore too. But he never was ready to cry for bumps or knocks; he would cry much more quickly if any one spoke sharply to him than if he hurt himself. So at first he lay still, wondering what was the matter. Then he sat up and looked about him, and

For a minute or two Baby could not make out what had happened.—P. 50.

then, seeing the broken box and the broken glass, he understood that he had done some harm, and he burst into piteous sobbing.

"Him didn't mean," he cried; "him didn't know there was nuffin in the tiny t'unk. Oh, what shall him do?"

He cried and sobbed, and, being now very frightened, he cried the more when he saw that there was blood on his little white nightgown, and that the blood came from one of his little cold feet, which had been cut by a piece of the broken glass. Baby was much more frightened by the sight of blood than by anything else —when he climbed up on the nursery chest of drawers, and Denny told him he'd be killed if he fell down, he didn't mind a bit, but when Lisa said that he might hurt his face if he fell, and make it *bleed*, he came down at once—and now the sight of the blood was too much.

"Oh, him's hurt hisself, him's all bleeding!" he cried. "Oh, *what* shall him do?"

He dared not move, for he was afraid of lifting the cut foot—he really did not know what to do—when he heard steps coming along the passage, pattering steps something like his own, and before he had time to think who it could be, a second little white-night-gowned figure trotted into the room.

"Baby, poor Baby, what's the matter?" and, looking up, Baby saw it was Fritz.

"Him's hurt hisself, him's tumbled, and the tiny t'unk is brokened, and somesing else is brokened. Him didn't mean," he sobbed; and Fritz sat down on the floor beside him, having the good sense to keep out of the way of the broken glass, and lifted the little bleeding foot gently.

"Must have some sticking-plaster," said Fritz. "There's some in mother's pocket-book in her room. We must go to mother, Baby."

"But him can't walk," said Baby piteously. "Him's foot bleedens dedful when him moves it."

"Then I must carry you," said Fritz, importantly.

With some difficulty he got Baby on to his back and set off with him. Baby had often ridden on Fritz's back before, in the nursery, for fun, and it seemed very nice and easy. But now, though he had only his nightgown on, Fritz was surprised to find how heavy he seemed after going a little way. He was obliged to rest after he had gone up a few steps, and Baby began to cry worse than before when he saw how tired poor Fritz was. I really don't know how they ever got to the door of mother's room, and, when their knocking brought her out, it was rather a

frightening sight for her—Baby perched on Fritz's back, both little boys looking white and miserable, and the wounded foot covered with blood.

But mother knew better than to ask what was the matter till she had done something to put things to rights again.

"Him's foot" was the first thing Baby said, stretching out his poor little toes.

And the foot looked so bad that mother felt quite thankful when she had bathed it and found that the cut was not really a very deep one after all. And when it was nicely plastered up, and both little boys were tucked into mother's bed to get warm again, then mother had to hear all about it. It was not much Fritz could tell. He, too, had wakened early, and had heard Denny and Baby talking, for he slept in a little room near theirs. He had fallen half asleep again, and started up, fancying he heard a noise and a cry, and, getting out of bed, had found his way to the pantry, guided by Baby's sobs. But what Baby was doing in the pantry, or why he had wandered off there all alone so early in the morning, Fritz did not know.

So Baby had to tell his own story, which he did straight on in his own way. He never thought of *not* telling it straight on; he was afraid mother would be

sorry when she heard about the "somesing" that was broken, but it had never entered his little head that one could help telling mother "ezackly" all about anything. And so he told the whole—how he had been "sinking" about trunks and packing, and "d'eaming" about them too, how Denny had been "razer c'oss" and wouldn't talk, and how the thought of the tiny sweet t'unk had come into his head all of itself, and he had fancied how nice it would be to go downstairs and look at it on the pantry shelf, and then how all the misfortunes had come. At the end he burst into tears again when he had to tell of the "somesing brokened," now lying about in shiny fragments on the pantry floor.

Poor mother! She knew in a minute what it was that was broken, and I cannot say but that she was very sorry, more sorry perhaps than Baby could understand, for she had had the pretty jugs many years, and the thoughts of happy days were mingled with the shining of the rainbow glass. Baby saw the sorry look on her face, and stretched up his two arms to clasp her neck.

"Him is so sorry, so werry sorry," he said. "Him will take all the money of him's money-box to buy more shiny jugs for mother.'

Mother kissed him, but told him that could not be.

"The jugs came from a far-away country, Baby dear," she said, "and you could not get them here. Besides, I cared for them in a way you can't understand. I had had them a long time, and one gets to care for things, even if they are not very pretty in themselves, when one has had them so long."

"Oh ses, him does understand," said Baby. "Him cares for old 'sings, far best."

"Yes," said Fritz, "he really does, mother. He cries when Lisa says she must put away his old shoes, and his old woolly lamb is dreadful—really dreadful, but he *won't* give it away."

"It *has* such a sweet face," said Baby.

"Well I don't care; I wish it was burnt up. He mustn't take it in the railway with us when we go away; must he, mother?"

"Couldn't it be washed?" said mother.

"I don't think so, and I don't believe Baby would like it as much if it was. Would you, Baby?" said Fritz.

Baby would not answer directly. He seemed rather in a hurry to change the subject.

"Mother," he said, "when we go away in the 'normous boat, won't we p'raps go to the country

where the shiny jugs is made? And if him takes all the money in him's money-box, couldn't him buy some for you?"

"They wouldn't be the same ones," said Fritz.

Baby's face fell. Mother tried to comfort him.

"Never mind about the jugs any more just now," she said. "Some day, perhaps, when you are a big man you will get me some others quite as pretty, that I shall like for your sake. What will please me more than new jugs just now, Baby, is for you to promise me not to try to do things like that without telling any one. Just think how very badly hurt you might have been. If only you had waited to ask me about the little box all would have been right, and my pretty jugs would not have been broken."

"And mother told us that last night, you know, dear," said Fritz, in his proper big brother tone. "Don't you remember in the story about her when she was little? It all came of her not waiting for her big sister to see about the trunk."

Baby gave a deep sigh.

"If God hadn't put so much 'sinking into him's head, it would have been much better," he said. "Him 'sinks and 'sinks, and zen him can't help wanting to do 'sings zat moment minute."

"Then 'him' must learn what *patience* means," said mother with a little smile. "But I'll tell you what *I've* been thinking—that if we don't take care somebody else may be hurting themselves with the broken glass on the pantry floor."

"P'raps the cat," said Baby, starting up, "oh *poor* pussy, if her was to cut her dear little foots. Shall him go downstairs again, mother, to shut the door? Why, him's foot's still *zather* bleedy," he added, drawing out the wounded foot, which had a handkerchief wrapped round it above the plaster.

"No," said his mother, "it will be better for me to tell the servants myself," so she rang the bell, and as it was now about the time that Denny had thought it when Baby first woke up, in a few minutes her maid appeared, looking rather astonished. She looked still more astonished, and a little afraid too, when she caught sight of the two curly heads, one dark and one light, on mother's pillow.

"Is there anything wrong with the young gentlemen?" she said. "Shall I call Lisa, my lady?"

"No, not quite yet," said mother. "I rang to tell you to warn James and the others that there is some broken glass on the pantry floor, and they must be careful not to tread on it, and it must be swept up."

"Broken glass, ma'am," repeated the maid, who was rather what Denny called "'quisitive." "Was it the cat? I did think I heard a noise early this morning."

"No, it wasn't the cat," said mother. "It was an accident. James will see what is broken."

The light curly head had disappeared by this time under the clothes, for Baby had ducked out of sight, feeling ashamed of its being known that *he* had been the cat. But as soon as the maid had left the room he came up again to the surface like a little fish, and a warm feeling of thanks to his mother went through his heart.

"You won't tell the servants it were him, will you?" he whispered, stretching up for another kiss.

"No, not if 'him' promises never to try to do things like reaching down boxes for himself. Herr Baby must ask mother about things like that, mustn't he?" she said.

Mother often called him "Herr Baby" for fun. The name had taken her fancy when he was a very tiny child, and Lisa had first come to be his nurse. For Lisa was *very* polite; she would not have thought it at all proper to call him "Baby" all by itself.

Herr Baby kissed mother a third time, which, as he was not a very kissing person, was a great deal in one morning.

"Ses," he said, "him will always aks mother. Mother is so sweet," he added coaxingly.

"He calls everything he likes 'sweet,'" said Fritz. "Mother and the cat and the tiny trunk—they're all sweet."

But mother smiled, so Baby didn't mind.

CHAPTER IV.

GOING AWAY

"She did not say to the sun good-night,
As she watched him there like a ball of light,
For she knew he had God's time to keep
All over the world, and never could sleep."

How, I can't tell, but, after all, *some*how the packing got done, and everything was ready. They left a *few* things behind that Herr Baby would certainly have taken had he had the settling of it. They didn't take the horses, *nor* the fireplaces, and, of course, as the horses weren't to go, Thomas and Jones had to be left behind too to take care of them, which troubled Baby a good deal. And no doubt Thomas and Jones would have been *very* unhappy if it hadn't been for the nice way Baby spoke to them about coming back soon, and the letters he would send them on their birthdays, and that he would never like any other Thomases and Joneses as much as them. It was really quite nice

to hear him, and Jones had to turn his head away a little—Baby was afraid it was to hide that he was crying.

It was a very busy time, and Baby was the busiest of any. There was so much to think of. The rabbits too had to be left behind, which was very sad, for one couldn't write letters to *them* on their birthdays; neither Denny, whom he asked about it, nor Baby himself, could tell when the rabbits' birthdays were, and besides, as Baby said, "what would be the good of writing them letters if they couldn't read them?" The only thing to do was to get the little girl at the lodge to *promise* to take them fresh cabbages every morning—that was one of the things Herr Baby had to see about, himself. Lisa lost him one morning, and found him at the lodge, after a great hunt, talking very gravely to the little girl about it.

"Zou will p'omise, Betsy, p'omise certain sure, *nebber* to forget," he was saying, and poor Betsy looked quite frightened, Herr Baby was so very solemn. Fritz wanted to make her kiss her mother's old Testament, the way he had seen men do sometimes in his grandfather's study when they came to tell about things, and to promise they would speak the truth; but Betsy, though she was ready enough to *promise*,

didn't like the other idea at all. She might be had up to the court for such like doings, she said, and as neither Fritz nor Baby had any idea what sort of place the court was, though they fancied it was some kind of prison for people who didn't keep their word, they thought it better to leave it.

The "calanies" and the "Bully" were to go, that was a comfort, and Peepy-Snoozle and Tim, the two dormice, also, another comfort. Baby's own packing was a serious matter, but, on the whole, I think mother and Lisa and everybody were rather glad he had it to do, as it gave other people a chance of getting *theirs* done without the little feet pattering along the passage or up the stairs, and the little shrill voice asking what was going to be put into *this* trunk or into *that* carpet-bag. He gave up thinking so much about the other packing after a while, for he found his own took all his time and attention. Mother had found him a box after all. Not *the* box of course—that was left empty, by Baby's wish, till some day when he was a big man, he should go to the country of the fairy glass and buy mother some new jugs—but a very nice little box, and she gave him cotton wool and crushy paper too, and everything was as neat as possible, and the box quite packed and ready,

the first evening. But it was very queer that *every* day after that Herr Baby found something or other he had forgotten, or something that Denny and he decided in their early morning talks, that it would be silly to take. Or else it came into his head in the night that his best Bible would be better in the *other* corner, and the scenty purse on the top of it instead of at one side. Any way it always happened that the box had to be unpacked and packed again, and the very last evening there was Herr Baby on his knees before it on the floor, giving the finishing touches, long after he should have been in bed.

"And we have to be up so early to-morrow morning," said mother, "my dear little boy, you really *should* have been fast asleep by this time."

"And he wakes me *so* early in the morning," said Denny, who was standing before the fire giving herself little cross shakes every time poor Lisa, who was combing out her long fair hair, came to a tuggy bit. "*Lisa*, you're *hurting* me; *Lisa*, do take care," she added snappishly.

"My dear Denny, how very impatient you are!" said her mother. "I don't know how you will bear all the little discomforts of a long journey if you can't bear to have your hair combed."

On this, Denny, as Fritz would have said, "shut up." She could not bear it to be thought that she was babyish or "silly." Her great, great wish was to be considered quite a big girl. You could get her to do anything by telling her it would be babyish not to do it, or that doing it would be like big people, which, of course, showed that she *was* rather babyish in reality, as sensible children understand that they cannot be like big people in everything, and that they wouldn't be at all nice if they were.

Baby always felt sorry for Denny or any of them when mother found fault with them. He jumped up from the floor—at least he *got* up, his legs were too short for him to spring either up or down very actively—and trotted across to his sister.

"Poor Denny," he said, reaching up to kiss her, "him won't wake her up so early to-mollow morning."

"But we'll *have* to wake early to-morrow," said Denny, rather crossly still, "it's no use you beginning good ways about not waking me now, just when everything's changed."

Baby looked rather sad.

"Is your box quite ready now, dear?" said his mother. "Well then, let Lisa get you ready for bed

as quick as she can, and you and Denny must go to sleep without any talking, and wake fresh in the morning."

But Baby still looked sad; his face began working and twisting, and at last he ran to mother and hid it in her lap, bursting into tears.

"Denny makes him so unhappy," he said. "Him doesn't like everysing to be changed like Denny says. Him is so sorry to go away and to leave him's house and Thomas and Jones, and oh! him is *so* sorry to leave the labbits!"

"And him's a tired little boy. I think it's because he's so tired that he's so sad about going away," said mother. "Think, dear, how nice it is that we're all going *together*, not Celia or Fritz or anybody left behind. For you know Thomas has his old mother he wouldn't like to leave, and Jones has his wife and children. And if the rabbits could talk, I'm quite sure they would tell you that they'd far rather stay here in their own nice little house, with plenty of cabbages, than be bundled into a box and taken away in the railway ever so far, without being able to run about for ever so many days."

Baby's face cleared a little.

"Betsy has p'omised," he said to himself. Then

he added, "*Him* won't like the railway neither if it's like that."

"But *him's* not going to be put in a box or a basket," said mother, laughing. "Him will have a nice little corner all to himself in a cushioned railway carriage, only just now he really *must* go to bed."

So she kissed him for good-night, and Denny too, who, by this time, had recovered her good-humour in the interest of listening to the conversation between her mother and Herr Baby, and soon both little sister and brother were fast asleep in their cots, dreaming about the journey before them I daresay, or perhaps forgetting all about it in the much queerer and stranger journeys that small people are apt to fly away upon at night, when their tired little bodies *seem* to be lying quite still and motionless in bed.

It was strange enough—*almost* as strange as a dream—the next morning when, long before it was light, they had all to get up and be dressed at once in their going-out things—that is to say their thick boots and gaiters, and woollen under-jackets (for it was very cold, though not yet far on in November), while their ulsters and comforters and caps, and the girls' sealskin coats and muffs and hats, were all laid out in four little heaps by Lisa, so that they

should be ready to put on the moment breakfast was over.

What a funny breakfast! Candles on the table, for it was not, of course, worth while to light the lamp, and everything looking more like a sort of "muddley tea," Fritz said, than their usual trim nursery breakfast.

"I can't eat," said Fritz, throwing down his bread and butter; "it's no use."

"And there's eggs!" said Denny, who was comfortably at work at hers, looking across at Fritz as if it wouldn't be very difficult to eat up his egg too. "I think it's very kind of cook to have got up so early and made us eggs 'cos we were going away, and——"

"'Twasn't cook, 'twas Abigail," said Fritz. "I saw her coming up with the eggs all in a pan with hot water, so that they shouldn't get cold, she said to Lisa."

"Well then it was very kind of Abigail, and——" said Denny.

"'Twasn't Abigail that made the eggs," said Baby, "'twas the hens zat laid them. Denny should say the *hens* was werry kind."

"Oh bother," said Denny, "I wish you'd not interrupt me. I don't care who it was. I only want

to say it's very stupid of Fritz not to eat his egg, when *somebody* made them for us, extra you know, because we're going away, and I think Fritz is very stupid."

"Come, Herr Fritz," said Lisa, encouragingly, "try and eat. You will be so hungry."

"I can't," said Fritz, "I've got a horrid feeling just like when mother took me to have that big tooth out. I feel all shaky and cruddley."

"Yes, *I* know," said Denny, going on with *her* breakfast all the same, "but eating's the best thing to make it go away. I felt just that way the day I broke grandfather's hotness measure, and mother said I must tell him myself. I couldn't eat a bit of dinner, and I sat on the stair all *screwged* up, waiting for him to go to the study."

"How dedful!" said Baby, with great feeling. But neither Fritz nor Celia seemed to think much of Denny's sufferings. No one had ever seen her nerves disturbed, and they did not therefore much believe in her having any.

"Grandfather's *what* did you say?" asked Celia.

"His hotness measure—the little glass pipe thing with a blob that goes up and down. He's got another now, you know."

"You mean his thermometer; you really should learn the proper names of things," said Celia, "you're quite big enough."

Denny would probably not have taken this in good part, though the "quite big enough" at the end was very much to her taste, but there was no time *this* morning for squabbling.

"Quick, quick, mine children," said Lisa, "the cart with the luggage is 'way, and the Herr Grandpapa is buttoning his coat."

"And Fritz hasn't eaten his egg!" said Denny, eyeing it dolefully, as Lisa was fastening her jacket.

"I *couldn't*," said Fritz. "There'll be sandwiches or something in the train—sure to be. Now come on; let's see what have I got to look after. Only Tim and Peepy-Snoozle. I *couldn't* lose my satchel, you see, for its strapped on me. Much more sensible than *girls*, who have to carry their bags over their arms."

And Fritz, in a new ulster, very long and rather stiff, and feeling, to tell the truth, a little uncomfortable at first, as new things generally do, stalked off—I don't think he *could* have run!—with the air of a very big man indeed.

Celia and Denny had a slight dispute as to which

was which of the bird's cages. For it had been settled that, for the journey at least, the canaries were to be Celia's charge and the "Bully" Denny's, though, hitherto, these three little birds had belonged to all the children together.

"You've got my cage, Denny," said Celia, sharply.

"I haven't," said Denny, holding hers the more tightly. It was not very easy to see, for both were covered up with dark blue stuff wrappers, to keep the birds warm, "and to make them think it's night all the way," said Baby.

"I haven't," repeated Denny, "there, don't you see *two* yellow tails in yours? Peep through."

And Denny proved to be right, so Celia had to give in.

And at last they were off! The drive to the station safely over without any misadventures, the luggage all locked up in the van, the children and the dormice and the birds—far more important things, of course, than the big people!—all comfortably settled at one end of the nice big saloon carriage, which grandfather had had sent down on purpose from London.

"Dear me," said Denny, jigging up and down on her seat, "so we're really off! How nice and springy these cushions are! And this carriage is as big as a

little house. I could *never* be tired of travelling in a carriage like this."

"Him zought we'd *nebber* get away," said Baby, with his usual solemnity. "Dear, dear, what dedful lots of boxes there is! Him's box is 'aside the 'normous big straw one; did zou know, Denny?"

"Poor grandfather," said Celia, "*what* a lot of times he said over, 'three black portmanteaux, four, no five canvas-covered, four carpet bags, one—fourteen in all. Is *that* right, Helen?' Grandfather's something like Baby, he thinks no one can do anything right but himself; and there's Peters come on purpose to bother about these things." (Peters was grandfather's own servant.) "I wish grandfather wouldn't fuss so. I hate people to think he's a fussy old man, something like Mr. Briggs in Punch. As if he had never travelled before!"

As may be imagined, these remarks of Celia's were made in a low voice, for, of course, they were intended for the nursery party alone. Fritz flew up in grandfather's defence.

"Very fine, Miss Celia," he said. "You may laugh at grandfather for fussing, but *suppose* he didn't, and *suppose* that when we get to—oh, bother, I can't say those French names—wherever it is we're going

to, *suppose* that Madamazelle Celia's trunk was lost, and Madamazelle Celia hadn't any best frocks or flounces, or Sunday hats, how would Madamazelle Celia look *then?* Perhaps she'd wish then that grandfather had fussed a little."

Celia turned to look for her bag, and having found it, she took out the book which she had brought with her to read on the way.

"You're too silly to speak to, Fritz," she said; "I'm going to read."

"So am I," said Denny, who had likewise armed herself with a book, though she was rather a dunce for her age, and couldn't read "runningly" as French people say. But *big* people always had books to read in the railway—that was enough for Denny, of course, to try to do so too.

"*I'm* going to take a nap, then," said Fritz, who was really looking rather white and tired. He had been wakened out of a very sound sleep this morning, and had not been able to eat any breakfast. Lisa thought that taking a nap was the best thing he could do, so she got down a bundle of the rugs to make him a pillow, and helped him to tuck up his legs comfortably, and Fritz settled himself for his little sleep, making Lisa promise to waken him when they came to a big station.

So everybody seemed inclined to be quiet. Herr Baby's corner was by the window. He looked about him. Celia and Denny were buried in their books, Fritz seemed asleep already; of the big people at the other end, grandfather's face was quite hidden in his newspaper, which he had kept over from last night on purpose to have something to read in the train, knowing that they would start before the postman came in the morning, and mother and auntie were talking together, softly, not to disturb him.

"Should you like the window more open?" said grandfather, suddenly looking up.

"No, thank you," said auntie. "I think that little chink is enough. It is really very cold this morning."

"How good the children are!" said mother. She spoke in a lower voice than auntie; but Baby heard her, for he had quick ears. "One could almost fancy they were all asleep."

"Yes," said auntie, "if it would last all the way to Santino, or even to Paris!"

"Or even to London!" said mother. "But they'll all be jumping about like grasshoppers before long."

Then they went on talking softly again about other things; and Baby didn't hear, and didn't care to hear. Besides, he had already been taught a lesson that boys

and girls cannot learn too young, which is, that to listen to things you are not meant to hear is a *sort* of cheating, for it is like taking something not meant for you. Of course, while auntie and mother were talking in a louder voice he could not help hearing, and it was no harm to listen, as if they had minded his hearing they would have spoken more in a whisper.

Baby turned to his window to amuse himself by looking out. First he tried to count the telegraph wires, but he could never be sure if there were eight or nine—he had not yet learnt to count higher than ten—for the top ones were so tiresome, they danced away out of sight, and all of a sudden danced down again, and sometimes they seemed to join together, so that he could not tell if they were one or two. He wondered what made them wave up and down so; whether there were men down in the ground that pulled them, and what they did it for; he had heard of "sending telegrams," and Denny had told him it meant sending messages on wires, but he did not know that these were the wires used for that. He fancied these wires must have something to do with the railway; perhaps they were to show the people living in the fields that the trains were coming, so that they shouldn't get in the way and be "runned over."

This made Baby begin to think of the people living in the fields; they were just then passing a little cottage standing all by itself. It looked a nice cottage, and it had a sort of little garden round it, and some cocks and hens were picking about. Baby looked back at the little cottage as long as he could see it; he wondered who lived in it, if there were any little boys and girls, and what they did all day. He wondered if they went to school, or if perhaps they sometimes went messages for their mother, and if they weren't frightened if they had to pass through the wood, which by this time the train was running along the edge of. Could this be Red Riding Hood's wood, perhaps? Baby shuddered as this idea came into his mind. Or it might be the wood that Hop-o'-my-thumb and his six brothers had to make their way through, where the birds *would* pick the crumbs they dropped to show the path. It would be very "dedful" for seven little boys to be lost in a wood like that, and still worse for one little boy all alone. Baby was very glad that when little boys had to go through woods *now* it was in nice railway carriages with mothers and aunties and everybodies with them. But even in this way the wood made him feel a *very* little frightened; just then it got so much darker. He looked up to see if they were all

still reading or asleep; he *almost* thought he would ask Lisa to take him on her knee a little, when, all of a sudden, the "railway," as he called it, screamed out something very sharp and loud, the rattle and the noise got "bummier" and yet sharper; Baby could see no trees, no fields, "no nothing." What could it be? It was worse than the wood.

"Oh, Lisa," cried poor Herr Baby, "the railway horses must have runned the wrong way. We's going down into the cellars of the world."

Lisa caught him up in her arms and comforted him as well as she could. It was only a tunnel, she told him, and she explained to him what a tunnel was, just a sort of passage through a hill, and that there was nothing to be frightened at. And she persuaded him to look up and see what a nice little lamp there was at the top of the carriage, on purpose to light them up while they were in the dark. Baby was quite pleased when he saw the little lamp.

"Who put it 'zere?" he said. "Were it God?"

He was rather disappointed when Lisa told him that it was the railway men who put it up, but then he thought again that it was very kind of the railway men, and that it must have been God who taught them to be so kind, which Lisa quite agreed in. But

even though the little lamp was very nice, Baby was very pleased to get out of the tunnel, and out of the rumbly, rattly noise, into the open daylight again, with the beautiful sun shining down at them out of the sky. For the day was growing brighter as it went on, and the air was a little frosty, which made everything look clear and fresh.

"Nice sun," said Baby, glancing up at his old friend in the sky, "that's the bestest lamp of all, isn't it? and it *were* God put it up there."

After that he must, I think, have taken a little nap in Lisa's arms almost without knowing it, for he didn't seem to hear anything more or to think where he was or anything, till all of a sudden he heard mother's voice speaking.

"Won't Baby have a sandwich, Lisa? And Denny, why, have you been asleep too, Denny?"

And sitting up on Lisa's knee, all rosy and dimpled with sleeping, his fair curls in a pretty tumble about his eyes, Baby saw Denny, looking very sleepy too, but trying hard to hide it.

"Oh," she said, smoothing down her hair and sitting up very straight, "I've been reading such a long time that my eyes got quite tired; that was why I shut them."

"Oh indeed!" said mother, but Baby could see that she was smiling at Denny, though she didn't laugh right out like Fritz and Celia.

They were all very happy, however, with their sandwiches and buns, and after they had eaten as much as they wanted, auntie taught them a sort of guessing game, which helped to pass the time, for already Denny and Fritz were beginning to think even the big saloon carriage rather a small room to spend a whole day in.

They passed two or three big stations, and then they were allowed to get out and walk up and down the platform a little, which was a nice change. But Baby was so dreadfully afraid of any of them being left behind that he could hardly be persuaded to get out at all, and once when he and Lisa were waiting alone in the carriage while the others walked about, and the train moved on a little way to another part, he screamed so loudly—

"Oh, mother, oh, auntie, oh, ganfather, and Celia, and Fritz, and Denny! All, all is left behind!"—that there was quite a commotion in the station, and when the train moved back again, and they all got in, he was obliged to kiss and hug each one separately, several times over, before he could feel quite sure he

had them all safe and sound, and that "not nobody" was missing.

It seemed a long time after it got dark, even though the little lamp was still lighted. But it was not light enough to see to read, and "the big lamp up in the sky," as Baby said, "was *kite* goned away." It puzzled him very much how the sun could go away every night and come back every morning, and the queerest thing of all was what Celia had told him —that "away there," in the far-off country where they were going, there would still be the same sun, the *very* same sun, that they had seen every morning peeping up behind the kitchen-garden wall, and whose red face they had said good-night to on the winter evenings, as he slipped away to bed down below the old elms in the avenue, where the rooks had their nests. Somehow as Baby sat in his corner, staring out now and then at the darkness through which they were whizzing, blinking up sometimes at the little lamp shining faintly in the roof, there came before his mind the pictures of all they had left behind; he seemed to see the garden and the trees *so* plain, and he thought how very, very quiet and lonely it must seem there now, and Baby's little heart grew sad. He felt so sorry for all the things they had

left—the rabbits and the pussy most of all, of course, but even for the dear old trees, and the sweet, "denkle" flowers in the garden; even for the tables and chairs in the house he felt sorry.

"Him's poor little bed will be so cold and lonely," he said to himself. "Him sinks going away is *werry* sad."

CHAPTER V.

BY LAND AND SEA

"So the wind blew softly,
And the sun shone bright."

GRANDFATHER had fixed that it would be best to go straight through at once to the seaport, where, the next morning, they would find the 'normous boat waiting to take them over the sea. They had to pass through London on the way, and, by the time they got to the big London station, Baby was very tired—so white and quiet that mother was a little frightened.

"I almost wish," she said, "that we had fixed to stay all night in London. Baby has never had a long railway journey before, since he was a *real* Baby, you know, and he is not very strong."

She was speaking to auntie. It was just when they were getting near the big London station. Auntie looked at Baby. He was lying on Lisa's knee with his eyes shut, as if he were asleep, but he

wasn't. He heard what they said, and he was rather pleased at them talking about him. In *some* ways he was very fond of being made a fuss about.

"He does look a little white shrimp," said auntie. "But then you know, May, he is so fair. He looks more quickly white if he is tired than other children. And he has been such a good little man all day—not one bit of trouble. He is really a capital traveller—*ever* so much quieter than the others."

She said these last few words in a low tone, not caring for the other children to hear; but if she had spoken quite loud I don't think they would have heard, and, indeed, it seemed as if they wanted to show that auntie's words were true; for just at that moment there came such a scream from Denny that everybody started up in a fright.

What *could* be the matter? everybody asked.

"It's all Denny," said Fritz, in a great fuss.

"It's not; it's all Fritz and Celia," said Denny.

"It's both of them," said Celia. "Mother, I wish you wouldn't let them be near each other. Denny put her hand into the dormice's cage when Fritz wasn't looking, and she poked out Tim, who was just beginning to come awake for the night, and she as

nearly as *could* be got his tail pulled off, and then, when Fritz caught her, she screamed."

"Fritz snipped my hand in the little door of the cage," sobbed Denny. "And Celia always takes Fritz's part."

Celia was beginning to "answer back," when auntie stopped her by a look—the children were sometimes rather afraid of auntie's "looks."

"Dear me, young people," said grandfather from his end of the carriage, "you might be peaceable for five minutes, and then we shall be in London, and you shall have a good tea before we go on again."

The children all grew quiet. They were glad to hear of tea, and they were a little ashamed of themselves. Auntie moved over to their end of the carriage.

"Him would like some tea too, p'ease," said Baby, as she passed him, and auntie patted his head.

"They are all tired, I suppose," said mother; "but it really is too silly, the way they quarrel about nothing."

"Auntie," said Celia softly, "I think it was partly my fault. Denny and Fritz asked me to tell them a story, and I wouldn't. It would have kept them quiet."

"Well, never mind now," said auntie. "You must all try and be very good to-morrow. This is only the first day, you know. You can't be expected to be very clever travellers yet. And the very first lesson to learn in travelling is—do you know what?"

"Not to lose your things?" said Celia.

"To be ready in time?" said Fritz.

"To sit still in the railway?" said Denny, rather meekly.

"All those are very good things," said auntie; "but they're not *the* thing I was thinking of. It was *to keep your temper.*"

The children got rather red, but I don't think any one noticed, for already the train was slackening, and in another minute or two they all got out and were standing together on the bustling platform, dimly lighted up by the gas lamps, which looked yellow and strange in the foggy air of a London November evening.

"Is zit London?" said Baby, and when Celia said "yes," he added rather mournfully, "Him doesn't sink London's pitty at all."

Poor little boys, for, after all, Fritz himself wasn't very big! They stood together hand in hand on the station platform, looking, and feeling, rather desolate.

Lisa was busy helping with the rugs and bags that had been in the carriage; mother and auntie, as well as grandfather and Peters and the maid, were all busy about the luggage.

"Stay there a moment, children," said somebody; but Denny had no idea of staying anywhere. Off she trotted to have a look at the luggage too, and Celia was half inclined to follow her, when her glance fell on her two little brothers.

"Celia," said Baby, catching hold of her, "don't go away too. Fritz is taking care of him, but we *might* be lostened."

He spoke rather timidly, and Celia's heart was touched. She was a good deal older than the others —nearly twelve—Fritz and Denny were very near in age, and sometimes Celia was a little cross at mother for not making difference enough, as she thought, and for keeping her still a good deal in the nursery. Mother had her own good reasons, and it is not always wise for big people to tell children their reasons, as Celia got to know when she grew wiser and bigger herself. She sometimes spoke rather crossly to the younger ones, and it made them a very little afraid of her, but in her heart she was kind. Just now she stooped down to kiss Baby.

"Don't be frightened, poor old man," she said, "you won't be lost. Fritz wouldn't let you be lost, would you, Fritz?"

Fritz brightened up at that, as Celia had meant he should. He, too, had been feeling a little strange and queer—the long journey and the sleeping in the day, all so different from their life at home, had rather upset him—but he would not have liked to say so! And now he was quite pleased at Celia telling Baby that, of course, Fritz was big enough to take care of him. It is so easy for children—bigger ones above all—to please each other and give nice feelings, when they really try to feel *with* each other and *for* each other.

The little boys looked much happier a few minutes later, when they were seated at tea in a comfortable corner of the refreshment room. Grandfather had sent Peters on, as soon as they had got the luggage all safe, to see that a table was placed for them by themselves. He, himself, went off to get some real dinner, for, of course, it was not to be expected that a gentleman, and especially an *old* gentleman, would be contented with tea, and bread and butter, and buns, however nice, but, to the children's great pleasure, mother and auntie said *they* would far rather stay and have tea with the little people.

"It is a good thing, isn't it, for them to stay with us?" said Fritz to Celia, confidentially, "for we are none of us *very* big, are we? And you know we *might* get lost somehow, as Baby says, though I wouldn't say so to him for fear of frightening him, you know."

"No, of course not," said Celia, and looking up she was pleased to see mother smiling at her. Mother saw that Celia was trying to be kind and helpful, and she did so like to see the way the little ones clung to Celia when she was gentle. Mother must have been something like Baby in her mind, I think, for when she looked at the boys sitting there in the strange, big station-room, their little faces grave and rather tired looking, a sort of sorry feeling came over *her* too, as she thought of the snug, cosy nursery at home, and the neat nursery tea, with the pretty pink and white cups she had chosen, and the canaries and "Bully" twittering in the window. Poor "calanies" and poor Bully! they didn't know where they had got to! They had slept nearly all day, thinking, as they were meant to think, that it was night, I suppose, but now they must have given up thinking so, for they were fidgeting about in their cages in an unhappy, restless sort of way. They

had plenty of seed, and Celia and Lisa took care that they should have fresh water, but still, poor little things, they were not very happy.

"Going away from their own home is really a trial for children," thought mother. She was a little tired herself, and being tired makes *everything* seem the wrong way.

But there was no help for it. They had all to make the best of things, and to set off again in another train and be rattled away to the sea. It was quite dark by now, of course, and it seemed very queer to start on another journey with so little rest between. I think, however, once they were all settled in the railway carriage, that the children slept the most of the way; Baby, at any rate, knew nothing more till he woke up to find himself in Lisa's arms, with a cold, fresh air—the air of the sea—blowing in his face, and making him lift up his head and look about him.

"Where is him?" he said. "Is him in the 'normous boat?"

"Not so, Herr Baby," said Lisa. "He shall first be undressed and have a nice sleep all night in bed, to rest him well. Lie still, mine child, and Lisa will keep you warm."

"Him likes the wind," said Baby. "It blowed his eyes open; him is quite awake now," and he tried to sit straight up in Lisa's arms.

"Oh, Herr Baby, I cannot hold you so," said Lisa.

"There is such a little way to go," said his mother, who was just behind, "lie still, dear, as Lisa tells you."

"Him would like to walk, him's legs is so 'tiff," said Baby. "P'ease let him walk if it's such a little way!"

His voice was so piteous that mother told Lisa to let him walk; they were going from the station to the hotel, a very little way, as mother had said. Lisa put Baby down on the ground; at first he really tumbled over, his legs felt so funny, but with Lisa's hand he soon got his balance again. It was a very dark night; they could not have seen their way but for the lights of the station and the town.

"What a dark countly zit is!" said Herr Baby. "Is there no moon in zit countly? Denny says in her hymn 'the moon to shine by night,' is there no moon 'cept in him's own countly?"

"What are you chattering about, little man?" said auntie.

"He's asking about the moon, auntie; he wants

to know if there isn't any moon here. He thinks we've left it behind at home," said Denny.

A sort of roar from poor Baby interrupted her.

"Oh, Denny, don't, *don't* say that," he cried, "it makes him sink of the labbits, and Thomas, and Jones, and the trees, and the flowers, and him's dear little bed, and all the sings we'se leaved behind. Him doesn't like you to speak of leaved behind."

"*Poor* Baby," said Denny, "I'm so sorry." She stooped down to kiss him, but it was so dark it wasn't easy to find his mouth, and she only managed to kiss the tip of his nose, which was as cold as a little dog's. This made Herr Baby begin laughing, which was a good thing, wasn't it? And he was so taken up in explaining to Lisa how funny it felt when Denny kissed his nose, that he had not time to think of his sorrows again till they were at the foot of the large flight of steps leading up to the big hotel where they were to sleep.

"Nice big house," said Baby, looking round; and as he caught sight of some of the waiters running about, he asked Lisa if "them was new servants instead of Thomas and Jones."

"Him likes Thomas and Jones best," he went on, the corners of his mouth going down again, so that

Lisa was obliged to assure him the servants were not going to be *instead* of Thomas and Jones, they were all only just going to stay one night at this big house, and to-morrow they would set off in the great ship to cross the sea.

The mention of the ship fortunately gave a new turn to Baby's thoughts; and he allowed Lisa to take him upstairs and warm him well before a good fire before she undressed him and put him to bed. The other children thought it great fun to sleep in strange rooms, in beds quite unlike those they had at home, and to have to hunt for their nightgowns and brushes and sponges in two or three *wrong* carpet bags before they came to the right one; but Baby's spirits were rather depressed, and it was not easy to keep him from crying in the sad little way he had when his feelings were touched.

"He is tired, poor little chap," said auntie, as she kissed him for good-night. "It is ever so much later than he has ever been up before. It is nearly ten."

"Him *were* up till ten o'clock on Kissmass," said Herr Baby, brightening up. "Him were up *dedful* late, till, till, p'raps till near twenty o'clock."

Auntie would have liked to laugh, but she took care not, for when Baby was in this sort of humour

there was no telling whether other people's laughing might not make him take to crying, so she just said,

"Indeed! That must have been *very* late; well, go to sleep now, and sleep till twenty o'clock to-morrow morning, if you like. We don't need to start early," she added, turning to Lisa; and I think poor Lisa was not sorry to hear it!

If I were to go on telling you, bit by bit, all about the journey, and everything that happened big and little, it would take a good while, and I don't know that you would find it very interesting. Perhaps it is better to take a jump, as people do in real big story books, and to go on with Herr Baby's adventures a few days later, when he, and Denny, and Fritz, and Celia, and Lisa, and mother, and auntie, and grandfather, and the "bully," and the "calanies," and Tim, and Peepy-Snoozle, and Linley, mother's maid, and Peters, grandfather's man, and I forget if there was any one else, but I think not; and all the boxes and carpet-bags, and railway-rugs, were safely arrived at Santino, the pretty little town with mountains on one side and the sea on the other, where they were all going to spend the winter. I must not forget to tell you one thing, however, which, I daresay, some of you who may have crossed "over the sea," and *not*

found it very delightful, may be anxious to know about. I mean about the voyage in the 'normous boat, which Baby had been so looking forward to, poor little fellow.

Well, wasn't it lucky, he was not at all disappointed? They had the loveliest day that ever was seen, and Baby thought 'normous boats far the nicest way of travelling, and he couldn't understand why grandfather couldn't make them go all the way to Santino in the nice boat, and when they explained to him that it couldn't be, because there was no sea for boats to go on all the way, he thought there must have been some great mistake in the way the world was made. And when they got to Santino, and the first thing he saw *was* the sea, blue and beautiful like a fairy dream, Baby was quite startled.

"Mother, auntie!" he said, reproachfully, "you toldened him there weren't no sea."

"We didn't mean that, Baby, dear," said mother; "we meant that there was no sea to come the shortest way; we would have had to come all round the land, and it would have been much longer. Look, it is like this," and mother traced with her parasol a sort of map on the sand, to show Baby that they had come a much nearer way. For they were standing by the sea-shore at the time.

"Yes," said Herr Baby, after looking on without speaking for a minute or two, "him under'tands now."

"So you've had your first lesson in geography," said auntie.

Baby stared up at her.

"Are *that* jography?" he said. "Him thought jography were awful, dedful difficult. Denny is so *werry* c'oss when her has jography to learn."

"Oh, because, of course, you know," said Denny, getting rather red, "*my* jography is *real* jography, with books and maps and ever so long rows of names to learn. Baby's so stupid—he always takes up things so; he'll be thinking now that if he makes marks on the sand, he'll be learning jography."

Denny turned away with a very superior air. Baby looked much hurt.

"Him's not stupid, *are* him?" he said; and in a moment Celia and Fritz were hugging him and calling Denny a naughty, unkind girl to tease him. Mother and auntie had walked on a little, so things *might* have gone on to a quarrel if Lisa hadn't stopped it.

"Mine children," she said, "it is too pity to be not friendly together. See what one beautifullest place this is—sky so blue and sea so blue, and all so

"Are *that* jography?" he said.—P. 94.

bright and sunny. One should be nothing but happy here."

"Yes," said Celia, looking round, "it is an awfully pretty place."

Celia, you see, was just beginning to be old enough to notice really beautiful things in a way that when children are *very* little, they cannot quite understand, though some do much more than others.

"It is a *very* pretty place," she said again, as if she were speaking to herself, for Fritz and Denny had taken it into their heads to run races, of which Lisa was very glad, and Celia stood still by herself, looking round at the lovely sea and sky, and the little white town perched up above, with the mountains rising behind. Suddenly a little hand was slipped into hers.

"Him would like to live here everways," said Baby's voice; "it *are* so pitty—somefin like Heaven, p'raps."

"I don't know," said Celia, "I suppose Heaven must be prettier than anything we could fancy."

"There's gold streets in Heaven, Lisa says," said Baby; "him sinks blue sky streets would be much pittier."

"So do I," said Celia.

Then they walked on a little, watching Fritz and Denny, already like two black specks in front—they had run on so far—and, somehow, in the *very* bright sunshine, one seemed to see less clearly. Mother and auntie were in front too, and when Fritz and Denny raced back again, quite hot and out of breath, mother said it was time for them all to go in; it was still rather too hot to be out much near the middle of the day, though it was already some way on in November, and next month would be the month that Christmas comes in!

"How funny it seems," said Celia. "Why, when we left home it was quite winter. Just think how we were wrapped up when we started on the journey, and now we're quite warm enough with nothing at all over our frocks."

"It may be cold enough before long," said mother, who was more accustomed to hot climates than the children; "sometimes the cold hereabouts comes quite suddenly, and it even seems colder from having been so warm before. I daresay you will be glad of your thick clothes before Christmas. But we must get on a little quicker, or else grandfather will be in a hurry for his breakfast."

"Ganfather's werry lazy not to have had him's

breakfast yet," said Baby. "*Him's* had *him's* breakfast ever so long ago, hundreds of years ago."

"Oh, Baby," said Denny, "how you do 'saggerate! It *couldn't* have been hundreds of years ago, because, you know, you weren't born then."

"Stupid girl!" said Baby, "how does you know? you wasn't there."

"Well, *you* weren't there," said Denny again.

"Children, don't contradict each other. It's not nice," said auntie.

"Him didn't begin," said Baby, "t'were Denny beginned."

"I didn't. I only said *once* that Baby wasn't born hundreds of years ago," said Denny, "and then he——"

"Onst is as wurst as twicet," said Baby.

Mother turned round at this. There was a funny look on her face, but still she spoke rather gravely.

"Baby, I don't know what's coming over you," she said. "It isn't like you to speak like that."

Baby's face grew red, and he turned his head away.

"Him didn't mean *zeally* that ganfather were lazy," he said, in a low voice.

"It wasn't *that* I was vexed with you for," said

mother. "I know you were joking when you said that. I meant what you said to Denny."

"Him's werry sorry," said Baby, on the point of tears.

"Never mind. Don't cry about it," said mother, who really wanted the children to be very good and happy this first day. And she was a little afraid of Baby's beginning to cry, for, *sometimes*, once he had begun, it was not very easy to stop him.

"You don't understand about grandfather and his breakfast," said auntie. "Here nobody has big breakfast when they first get up except you children, who have the same that you have at home."

"No we don't," said Denny. "At home we have bread and milk every day except Sunday—on Sunday we have bacon or heggs, because that's the nothing-for-breakfast day."

Auntie stared at Denny.

"Really, Denny," she said, "it is sometimes a little difficult to be sure that you have got all your senses. How can you have 'nothing for breakfast' when you have bacon, and—who in the world ever taught you to say 'heggs'?"

"I meant to say 'neggs,'" said Denny very humbly. "Grandfather laughed at me because I didn't say

'hippotamus' right—I called it a 'nippotamus,' and he made me say 'hi-hi-hip,' and that's got me into the way of saying it to everything, like calling a negg, a hegg."

"*A negg*," repeated auntie slowly. "Can't you hear any difference between 'a negg,' and 'an egg'? Spell, a-n an, e-g-g egg."

Denny repeated it.

"What dedful jography Denny's having," observed Baby; "I can say *a negg, quite* right."

"And so you too call 'a negg' nothing for breakfast?" said auntie.

"Neggs and bacon is nothing for breakfast," answered Baby.

"Auntie," said Fritz, "you don't understand. We call it nothing for breakfast when there's not bread-and-milk, you know, for on bread-and-milk days we have just one little cup of tea and a bit of bread-and-butter after the bread-and-milk. But on Sundays, and birthdays, there's nothing for the *first*, and so we get better things, more like big people, and tea, and whatever there is, as soon as we begin. That's why we like 'nothing for breakfast,' do you see, auntie?"

"I see," said auntie, "but I certainly couldn't have guessed. I hope there's *something* for breakfast

to-day for us, for I'm very hungry, and look, there's grandfather coming out to meet us, which looks as if he were hungry too. And what have you to say to it, old man?" she added, as Herr Baby came up the steps, one foot at a time, of course, "aren't you hungry after your walk?"

"Him's hungry for him's *dinner*, but not for him's *breakfast;* in course not," said Baby, with great dignity.

CHAPTER VI.

AN OLD SHOP AND AN OGRE

"Innocent face with the sad sweet eyes,
Smiling on us through the centuries."

BABY and Fritz went out a walk that afternoon in the town with auntie and Lisa. Celia and Denny had gone for a drive with mother and grandfather, which the big people thought would make a good division. Grandfather was very fond of children, but in a carriage, he used to say, *two* small people were enough of a good thing. So Celia and Denny worried Lisa to get out their best hats and jackets—which were not unpacked, as grandfather had not yet decided whether they should stay at the hotel or get a house for themselves—and set off in great spirits on the back seat of the carriage.

Fritz and Baby were in very good spirits too. Fritz wanted to walk along the sort of front street of

the town which faced the sea, for he was never tired of looking at boats and ships. Baby liked them too, but what he most wanted to see was the shops. Baby was very fond of shops. He was fond of buying things, but before he bought anything he used to like to be quite sure which was the best shop to get it at —I mean to say at which shop he could get it best— and he often asked the price two or three times before he fixed. And he had never before seen so many shops or such pretty and curious ones as there were at Santino, so he was quite delighted, though if you hadn't known him well you would hardly have guessed it, for he trotted along as grave as a little judge, only staring about him with all his eyes.

And indeed there were plenty of things to stare at. Fritz's tongue went very fast. He wanted auntie to stop every minute to look at something wonderful. The carts drawn by oxen pleased him and Baby very much.

"That's the working cows they told us about," said Fritz. "They're very nice, but I think I like horses best, don't you, Baby?"

"No, him likes cows best," said Baby, "when him's a man him will have a calliage wif hundreds of cows to pull it along, and wif lots and lots of gold bells all tinkling. Won't that be lubly?"

"Not half so nice as a lot of ponies, all with bells," said Fritz, "they'd make ever so much more jingling, 'cos they go so fast. Isn't it funny to see all the women with handkerchers on their heads and no bonnets, Baby?"

"When him's a man," said Baby again—he was growing more talkative now—"when him's a man, him's going to have auntie and Lisa," auntie and Lisa came first, of course, because they happened to be in his sight, "and mother, and Celia, and Denny *all* for his wifes, and them shall all wear most bootly hankerwifs on them's heads, red and blue and pink and every colour, and gold—lots of gold."

"Thank you," said auntie, "but by that time my hair, for one, will be quite gray; I shall be quite an old woman. I don't think such splendid trappings would suit me."

"Him said *handkerwifs*, not traps—him doesn't know what traps is," said Baby. "And him will be werry kind to you when you're old. Him will always let you come in and warm yourself, and give you halfpennies."

"Thank you, dear, I'm sure you will," said auntie. But she and Fritz looked at each other. That was one of Herr Baby's ideas, and they couldn't get him

to understand, so mother settled it was better to leave it and he'd understand of himself when he grew bigger. He thought that *everybody*, however rich and well off they might be, had to grow quite, quite poor, and to beg for pennies in the streets before they died. Wasn't it a funny fancy? It was not till a good while afterwards that mother found out that what had made him think so was the word "old." He couldn't understand that growing old could mean only growing old in years—he thought it meant as well, poor and worn-out, like his own little old shoes. Just now it would have been no good trying to explain, even if mother had quite understood what was in his mind, which she didn't till he told her himself long after. For it only made him cry when people tried to explain and *he* couldn't explain what he meant. There was nothing vexed him so much! And I think there was something rather nice mixed up with this funny idea about getting old. It made Baby wish to be so kind to all poor old people. He would look at any poor old beggar in such a strange sad way, and he always *begged* to be allowed to give them a penny. And, though no one knew of it, in his own mind he was thinking that his dear little mother or his kind

auntie would be like that some day, and he would like rich little boys to be kind to them then, just as he was now to other poor old people. Of course, he said to himself, "If *him* sees dear little mother and auntie when they get old, *him* will take care of them and let them rest at his house every time they come past, but *p'raps* him might be far away then."

And sometimes, when grandfather spoke about getting old and how white his hair was growing, Baby would look at him very gravely, for in his own mind he was wondering if the time was very soon coming for poor grandfather to be an old beggar-man. Baby thought it *had* to be, you see, he thought it was just what must come to everybody.

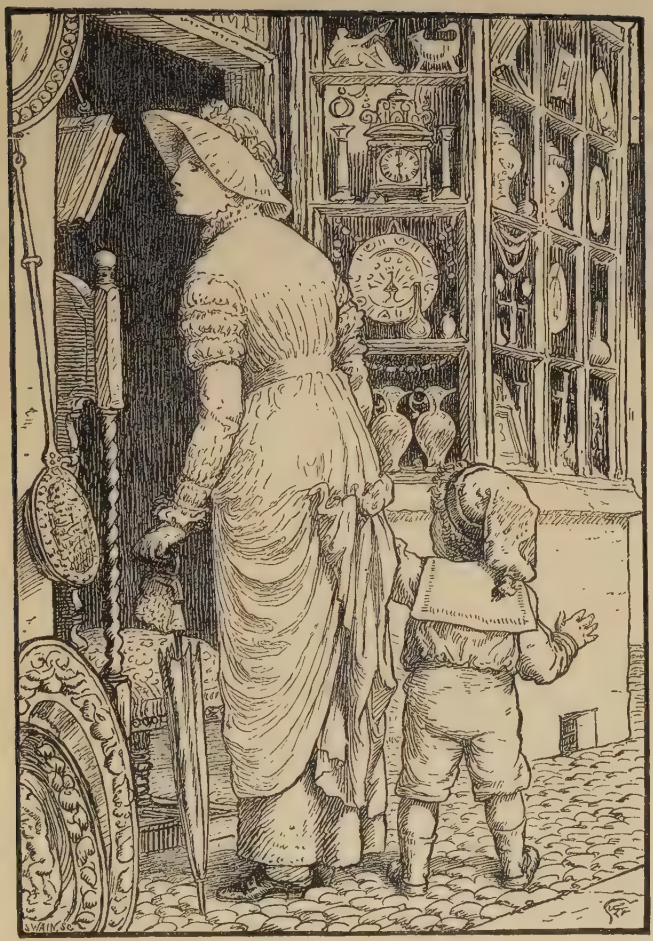
Just as auntie and he had finished talking about getting old they turned a corner and went down a street which led them away from the view of the sea. This street had shops at both sides, and some of them were very pretty, but they were not the kind of shops that the little boys cared much for—they were mostly dressmakers' and milliners' and shawl shops. Lots of grand dresses and hats and bonnets were to be seen, which would have pleased Celia and Denny perhaps, but which Fritz said were very stupid. Auntie did not seem to care for them either—she was

in a hurry to go to an office where she was going to ask about a house that might do for them. So she walked on quickly, as quickly at least as Baby's short legs could go, for she held him by the hand, and Fritz and Lisa came behind. They left this street in a minute and crossed through two or three others before auntie could find the one she wanted. Suddenly Baby gave her a tug.

"Oh auntie," he said, "p'ease 'top one minute. Him sees shiny glass jugs like dear little mother's. Oh, do 'top."

Auntie stopped. They were passing what is called an old curiosity shop; it was a funny looking place, seeming very crowded even though it was a large shop, for it was so very full of all sorts of queer things. Some among them were more queer than pretty, but some were very pretty too, and in one corner of the window there were several jugs, and cups, and bottles, and such things, of very fine glass, with the same sort of soft-coloured shine on it that Baby remembered in the two jugs that he had pulled down in the tiny trunk. Baby's eyes had spied them out at once.

"Look, look, auntie," he said, again gently tugging her.



"Oh, auntie," he said, "p'ease 'top one minute. Him sees shiny glass jugs like dear little mother's. Oh, do 'top."—P. 106.

"Yes, Baby dear, very pretty," said auntie, but without paying much attention to the glass, for she was not thinking of Baby's adventure in the pantry at the moment, and did not know what jugs of his mother's he meant.

"There is two *just* like mother's," said Baby, but he spoke lower now, almost as if he were speaking to himself. An idea had come into his mind which he had hardly yet understood himself, and he did not want to speak of it to any one else. He just stood at the window staring in, his two eyes fixed on the glass jugs, and the great question he was saying to himself was, "How many pennies would they cost?"

"Them's a little smaller, him sinks," he murmured, "but p'raps mother wouldn't mind."

It was a mistake of his that they were smaller; they were really a little larger than the broken ones. Besides Baby had never seen the broken ones till they *were* broken. One of them had been much less smashed than the other, and mother had examined it to see if it could possibly be mended so as to look pretty as an ornament, even though it would never do to hold water, and, when she found nothing could be done, she had told Thomas to keep the top part of it as a sort of pattern, in case she ever had a chance

of getting the same. I think I forgot to explain this to you before, and you may have wondered how Baby knew so well what the jugs had been like.

"Them is a little smaller," he said again to himself. He did not understand that things often look smaller when they are among a great many others of the same kind, and though there was not a very great deal of the shiny glass in the shop window, there was enough to make it rather a wonder that such a little boy as Baby had caught sight of the two jugs at all, for they were behind the rest. He had time to look at them well, for, though auntie had been rather in a hurry, she, too, stood still in front of the shop, for something had caught her eyes too.

"How *very* pretty, how sweet!" she said to herself, "I wish I could copy it. It seems to me beautifully done," and when Fritz, who had not found the shop so interesting as the others had done, in his turn gave her a tug and said, "Auntie, aren't you coming?" she pointed out to him what it was she was so pleased with.

"Isn't it sweet, Fritz?" said auntie.

"Yes," said Fritz, "but it's rather dirty, auntie, isn't it?"

Fritz was very, what is called, *practical*. The

"it" that auntie was speaking about was an old picture, hanging up on the wall at the side of the door. It was the portrait of a little girl, a very little girl, of not more than three or four years old. She had a dear little face, sweet and bright, and yet somehow a very little sad, or else it was the long-ago make of the dress, and the faded look of the picture itself, beside the baby-like face that made it *seem* sad. You couldn't help thinking the moment you saw it, "Dear me, that little girl must be a very old woman by now or most likely she must be dead!" I think it was that that made one feel sad on first looking at the picture, for, after all, the face *was* bright and happy-looking: the rosy, roguish, little mouth was smiling, the soft blue eyes had a sort of twinkling fun in them, though they were so soft, and the fair hair, so fair that it almost seemed white, drawn up rather tight in an old-fashioned way, fell back again on one side as if little Blue-eyes had just been having a good run. And one fat, dimpled shoulder was poked out of the prim white frock in a way that, I daresay, had rather shocked the little girl's mother when the painter first showed her his work, for our little, old, great-great-grandfathers' and great-great-grandmothers', children, must have had to sit very, very still in

their very best and stiffest frocks and suits when their pictures were painted, poor little things! They were not so lucky as you are nowadays, who have only to go to the photograph man's for half an hour, and keep your merry faces still for a quarter of a minute, if your mothers want to have a picture of you!

But Blue-eyes must have had some fun when *her* picture was painted, I think, or else that little shoulder wouldn't have got leave to poke itself out of its sleeve, and there wouldn't have been that mischievous look about the corners of her mouth.

"*Isn't* it a little dirty, auntie?" said Fritz.

"Wouldn't your face look a little dirty if it had been hanging up in a frame for over a hundred years?" said auntie, laughing, at which Fritz looked rather puzzled.

Then auntie's eyes went back to the picture again.

"It *is* sweet," she said, "very, very sweet, and so perfectly natural."

All this time, as I told you, Herr Baby's whole mind had been given to the shiny glasses. Suddenly the sound of his aunt's voice caught his ear, and he looked up.

"What is it that is so 'weet, auntie?" he said.

"The picture over there, dear. Hanging up by the door. The little girl."

Baby looked up, and in a moment his eyes brightened.

"Oh, what a *dear* little baby!" he said. "Oh, her *is* 'weet! Auntie, him would so like to kiss her."

"You darling!" said auntie, her glance turning from the sweet picture face above to the sweet living face beside her. "I wonder if you will ever learn to paint like that, Baby. *I* should very much like to copy it if I could have the loan of it. It would be sure to be very dear to buy," she added to herself. "But we must hurry, my little boys," she went on. "I was tempted to waste time admiring the picture, but we must be quick."

Fritz and Lisa turned away with auntie, but Baby waited one moment behind. He pressed his face close against the shop window and whispered softly,

"Pitty little girl, him would like to kiss you. Him will come a 'nother day. P'ease, pitty little girl, don't let nobody take away the shiny glasses, for him wants to buy them for mother."

Then, quite satisfied, he trotted down the street after the others, who were waiting for him a few doors off.

"Were you saying good-bye to the picture, Baby?" said auntie, smiling.

"Yes," said Baby gravely.

Auntie soon found the office where she was to hear about the house they were thinking of taking. The little boys stood beside her and listened gravely while she asked questions about it, though they couldn't understand what was said.

"Him wishes the people in this countly wouldn't talk lubbish talk," said Herr Baby to Fritz with a sigh. "Him would so like to know what them says."

"*I* want to know if we're going to have a house with a garden," said Fritz. "That's all *I* care about," and as soon as they were out in the street again, he asked auntie if "the man" had said there was a garden to the house.

"There are several houses that I have to tell your grandfather about," said auntie. "Some have gardens and some haven't, but the one we like the best has a garden, though not a very big one."

"Not as big as the one at home?" said Fritz.

"Oh dear no, of course not," said auntie. "It is quite different here from at home. People only come to stay a short time, they wouldn't care to be troubled with big gardens."

"I don't mind," said Fritz amiably, "if only it's big enough for us to have a corner to dig in, and somewhere to play in when Lisa's in a fussy humour."

"Mine child," said Lisa mildly. Poor Lisa, she was not a very fussy person! Indeed she was rather too easy for such lively young people as Fritz and Denny.

"And do you want a garden, too, very much, Baby?" said auntie.

Baby had hardly heard what they were saying. His mind was still running on the shiny jugs and the blue-eyed little girl.

"Him wants gate lots of pennies," he said, which didn't seem much of an answer to auntie's question.

"Lots of pennies, my little man," said auntie. "What do you want lots of pennies for?"

But Baby would not tell.

Just then they saw coming towards them in the street two very funny looking men. They had no hats or caps on their heads, so the children could see that they had no hair either, at least none on the top, where it was shaved quite off, and only a sort of fringe all round left. Then they had queer loose brown coats, with big capes, something like grandfather's Inverness cloak, Fritz thought, and silver chains hanging down

at their sides, and, queerest of all, no stockings or proper boots or shoes, only things like the *soles* of shoes strapped on to their bare feet. These were called sandals, auntie said, and she told the boys that these funny looking men were monks, "Franciscans." she said they were called. They all lived together, and they never kept any money, and people said—but auntie thought that was not quite true—that they never washed themselves.

"Nasty dirty men," said Fritz, making a face. "I shouldn't like to be a Franciscan."

"Not in winter, Fritz?" said Baby. "Him wouldn't mind in winter when the water *are* so cold. Lisa," he went on, turning round to his nurse, "'member—when the *werry* cold mornings comes, him's going to be a Frantisker—will you 'member, Lisa?"

"But what about the pennies?" said auntie, laughing. "If you are a Frantisker, Baby, you won't have any pennies, and you said just now you wanted a great lot of pennies."

Baby looked very grave.

"Then him won't be a Frantisker," he said decidedly.

After that he spoke very little all the way home. He had a great deal on his mind, you see. And his

last thought that night as he was falling asleep was, "Him are so glad him asked the little pitty girl to take care of the shiny jugs."

Funny little Herr Baby! How much was fancy, how much was earnest in his busy baby mind, who can tell?

A few days after this, they all moved from the Hotel to the pretty house with a garden which auntie had gone to ask about. It *was* a pretty house. I wish I could show it to you, children! It had not only a garden but a terrace, and this terrace overlooked the sea, the blue sunny sea of the south. And from one side, or from a little farther down in the garden, one could see the white-capped mountains, rising, rising up into the sky, with sometimes a soft mist about their heads which made them seem even higher than they were, "high enough to peep into heaven," said Baby; and sometimes, on very clear days, standing out sharply against the blue behind, so that one could hardly believe it would take more than a few minutes to run to the top and down again.

There were many interesting things in this garden —things that the children had not had in the old garden at home, nice though it was. It was not so beautifully neat as the flower part of the garden at

home, but I do not think the children liked it any the less for that. The trees and bushes grew so thickly that down at the lower end it was really like a wilderness, a most lovely place for hide-and-seek. Then there was a fountain, a real fountain, where the water actually danced and fell all day long; and all round the windows of the house and the trellised balcony there were the most lovely red shaded leaves, such as one never sees in such quantities in the north. And in among the stones of the terrace there lived lizards—the most delightful lizards. One in particular grew so friendly that he used to come out at meal-times to drink a little milk which the children spilt for him on purpose; for the day nursery, or school-room, as Celia liked it to be called, opened on to the terrace too, though at the other end from the two drawing-rooms and grandfather's "study," and the windows were long and low, opening like doors, so that Lisa had hard work to keep the children quiet at table the first few days, for every minute they were jumping up to see some new wonder that they caught sight of. Altogether it was a very pretty home to spend the winter in, and every one seemed very happy. Bully and the "calanies" were as merry as larks, if it is true that larks are merrier than other birds, and Peepy-Snoozle

and Tim, mistaking the bright warm sunshine for another summer, I suppose, got in the habit of being quite lively about the middle of the day as well as in the middle of the night, instead of spending all the daylight hours curled up like two very sleepy fairy babies with brown fur coats on, in their nice white cotton-wool nests.

There was so much to do and to think of the first few days that I think Baby forgot a little about what he had seen in the old curiosity shop. Auntie, too, was too busy to give any thought to the picture which had so taken her fancy, though neither she nor Baby *really* forgot the dear little face with its loving, half-merry, half-sad blue eyes. But auntie had to help mother to get everything settled; and of course there was a good deal to explain to the strange servants, for neither Peters nor Linley the maid knew "lubbish talk," as Baby *would* call it, at all, and it was very funny indeed to hear Peters trying to make the cook understand how grandfather liked his cutlets, or Linley "pounding" at the housemaid, as Fritz called it, to get it into her head that *she* didn't call it *cleaning* a room to sweep all the dirt into a corner where it couldn't be seen! Peters was more patient than Linley. When Linley couldn't make herself

understood she used to shout louder and louder, as if that would make the others know what she meant, and then she used to say to Celia that it really was "a *very* hodd thing that the people of this country seemed not to have all their senses." And however Celia explained to her, she *couldn't* be got to see that she must seem just as stupid to them as they seemed to her! Peters was less put about. He had been in India with grandfather, so he said he was used to "furriners." He seemed to think everybody that wasn't English could be put together as "furriners"; but he had brought a dictionary and a book of little sentences in four languages, and he would sit on the kitchen table patiently trying one language after another on the poor cook, just as when one can't open a lock, one tries all the keys one can find, to see if by chance one will fit. The cook was a very mild, gentle man; he had a nice wife and two little children in the town, and he was inclined to be very fond of Herr Baby, and to pet him if ever he got a chance. But that wasn't for a good while, for Baby was at first terribly frightened of him. He had a black moustache and whiskers and very black eyes, and they looked blacker under his square white cook's cap, and the first time Baby saw him through the

kitchen window, the cook happened to be standing with a large carving-knife in one hand, and a chicken which he was holding up by the legs, in the other. Off flew Herr Baby. A little way down the garden he ran against Denny, who was also busy examining their new quarters.

"Oh, Denny, Denny!" he cried, "this is a dedful place—there's a' ogre, a real tellable ogre in the house. Him's seen him in one of the windows under the dimey-room. Oh, Denny, Denny, p'raps him'll eaten us up."

Denny for the first moment was, to tell the truth, a little bit frightened herself. Common sense told her there *were* no such things as ogres, not now-a-days any way, at least not in England, their own country. But a dreadful idea struck her that this was *not* England; this might be one of the countries where ogres, like wolves and bears, were still occasionally to be found. There was no telling, certainly; but not for a good deal would Miss Denise Aylmer, a young lady of nine years old *past*, have owned to being frightened as long as she could possibly help it.

She caught Baby by the hand.

"What sall we do?" he said; "sall we go and tell mother?"

Denny considered.

"We'd better go and see again," she said very bravely. "You must have made a mistake, I think, Baby dear. I don't *think* there can be any ogres here."

Baby was much struck by Denny's courage. His hand slipped back a very little out of hers.

"Will *you* go and see, Denny?" he said. "Him will stay here till you comes back."

"Oh, no, you'd better come with me," said Denny, who felt that even Baby was better than nobody. "I shouldn't know where you saw the ogre," and she kept tight hold of his hand. "Which window was it?"

"It were at a tiny window *really* under the ground. Him was peeping to see if there was f'owers 'side of the wall," said Baby. "Him'll show you, Denny; him *are* so glad you isn't f'ightened."

They set off down the path, making their way rather cautiously as they got near the house. Suddenly Denny felt Baby squeeze her hand more tightly, and with a sort of scream he turned round and hid his face against her.

"There! There!" he cried. "Him sees the ogre coming."

Denny looked up. She saw a rather little man

with a white apron and a white cap, carrying a couple of cackling hens or chickens in his arms, coming across the garden from the house. He was on his way to a little sort of poultry-yard, where he had fastened up half-a-dozen live chickens he had bought at the market that morning, meaning to kill two of them for dinner, but finding them not so fat as he had expected, he was putting them back among their friends for a day or two. Very like a *real* ogre, if Denny and Baby had understood all about it, which they didn't. Denny herself, for a minute or two, felt puzzled as to who this odd-looking man could be. But he was no *ogre*, that was certain, any way.

"Don't be frightened, Baby, it's not a' ogre," she said. "Look up, he's far too little."

Baby ventured to peep round. The little black-eyed, white-capped man came towards them smiling.

"Bon jour, Mademoiselle, bon jour, Monsieur Bébé," he said, looking quite pleased. And then he stroked down the ruffled feathers of the poor chickens, and held them out to the two children, chattering away at a great rate in Baby's "lubbish talk," hardly a word of which they understood.

"Can he be wanting to sell the chickens?" said Denny.

The cook, who had before this lived with families from England, understood the children's language better than they did his, which, however, is not saying a great deal.

"Yes, Mees, pairfectly," he said. "Me sell zem at ze marché the morning. Fine poulets, goot poulets, not yet strong—wait one, two, 'ree days—be strong for one grand dinner for Madame."

"Who are you? What's your name, please?" said Denny, still a little alarmed.

"Jean-Georges, Mademoiselle," said the little man, with a bow. "Jean-Georges compose charming plates for Mademoiselle and Monsieur Bébé. Jean-Georges loves little messieurs and little 'demoiselles. Madame permit Monsieur and Mademoiselle visit Jean-Georges in his cuisine one day."

Denny caught the word "cuisine," which, of course, children, you will know means "kitchen."

"He's the cook, Baby," she said, with great relief; "don't you remember grandfather said he must have a man cook? Good morning, Mr. Cook, we'll ask mother to let us go and see you one day in your kitchen, and you must make us very nice things to eat, please Mr. Cook."

"Pairfectly, Mademoiselle," said Jean-Georges,

with as magnificent a bow as he could manage, considering the two chickens in his arms, and then he walked away.

"What a *very* nice man!" said Denny, feeling very proud of herself, and quite forgetting that she, too, had not been without some fears. "You see, Baby dear, how foolish it is to be frightened. I *told* you there couldn't be any ogres here."

Herr Baby did not answer for a moment. He had certainly very much admired Denny's courage, but still he wasn't quite sure that she had not been a *very* little afraid, just for a minute, when he had called out "There he is!"

"What would you have done if there *had* been a' ogre, Denny?" he said.

"Oh, bother," said Denny, "what's the good of talking about things that *couldn't* be? Talk of something sensible, Baby."

Baby grew silent again. They walked on slowly down the garden path.

"Denny," said Baby, in a minute or two, "didn't the little man say somefin about mother having a party?"

Denny pricked up her ears at this. Parties of all kinds pleased her very much.

"Did he?" she said, "I didn't notice. He said something about Madame's dinner, but I didn't think he meant a dinner-*party*. Perhaps he did though. We'll ask. I'd like mother to have some parties; it seems quite a long time since I had one of my best frocks on to come down to the drawing-room before dinner, the way we did at home. And I know mother and auntie have friends here. I heard that stupid little footman asking Linley what day 'Miladi' would 'receive,' that means have visitors, Baby."

Denny's tongue had run on so fast, that it had left Baby's wits some way behind. They had stopped short at the first idea of a party.

"Mother likes to make *werry* pitty dinners when she has parties," he said. "Mother told him that were why she were so solly when him breaked her's pitty glasses."

"I don't know what you're talking about, Baby," said Denny. "Let's have a race. I'll give you a start."

CHAPTER VII.

BABY'S SECRET

'Pussy, only you I'll tell,
For you can keep secrets well;
Promise, pussy, not a word.'
Pussy reared her tail and purred."

THERE was a cat at the Villa Désirée, Baby's, and Denny's, and "all of them's house," as Baby would have called it. Where the cat came from I don't know—whether it belonged to the villa and let itself out with it every winter, like the furniture, or whether it was really the cat of Madame Jean-Georges, and had followed Monsieur Jean-Georges back one evening when he had been home to see his "good friend" (that was what he called his wife), and his two "bébés," is what I cannot tell. I only know the cat was there, and that when Baby could get a chance of playing with it he was very pleased. He didn't often have a chance, in his own room, for "Mademoiselle," as Celia

was always called by the new servants, a title which she thought much nicer than "Miss Aylmer," or "Miss Celia," *Mademoiselle*, said "the stupid little footman," had given strict orders that "Minet" was not to be allowed upstairs for fear of the "pets," the "calanies," and the Bully, and Peepy-Snoozle, and Tim, all of whom would have been very much to Minet's taste, I fear. It was very funny to see the way the little footman went "shoo-ing" at the poor cat the moment Celia appeared, for Celia had rather grand manners for her age, and the servants thought her very "distinguished," especially the stupid little footman. But Herr Baby was very sorry for poor Minet; he had no particular pet of his own here, nothing to make up for his "labbits," and so he took a great fancy to the pussy.

"Poor little 'weet darling," he would call it; "Celia's a c'uel girl to d'ive Minet away, *Minet* wouldn't hurt the calanies, or the Bully, or the sleepy-mouses; Minet is far too good."

"Pray, how do *you* know, Baby?" Celia would say. "Cats are cats all the world over, every one knows that."

"*Minet* aren't," Baby would have it, "Minet has suts a kind heart. Him asked Minet if her would

hurt the calanies and the sleepy-mouses, and her said 'no, sairtingly not.'"

"Baby!" said Denny, "what stories! Cats can't talk. You shouldn't tell stories."

"Minet can talk," said Baby. "When him asks for somefin, her says 'proo-proo-oo,' and that means 'yes,' and if her means 'no,' her humps up her back and s'akes her tail. When him asked Minet if her would like to hurt the calanies, her humped up her back *never* so high, and sook and *sook* her tail, for no, *no*, NO!"

Celia could not find an answer to this. Baby went on stroking Minet with great satisfaction, as if there was nothing more to be said.

"All the same," said Celia at last, "I don't want Minet to come upstairs. She's quite as happy downstairs, and, you see, it would *frighten* the birds and the dormice if they saw her, for *they* mightn't understand that she wouldn't, on any account, hurt them."

"Werry well," said Baby, and he went on playing with his new pet.

"Herr Baby," said Lisa coming into the room a moment or two later; "mine child, how is it that your coat is so dirty? All green, Herr Baby, as if you had rubbed it on the wet grass."

"It's with his poking in among the bushes by the kitchen window," said Denny of the ready tongue; "yesterday, you know, Baby, when you thought——"

"Hush," said Baby, "don't talk to me. You distairb me and the cat—we'se busy."

Denny and Lisa looked at each other and smiled.

"Pussy, pitty pussy, dear Minet," went on Baby who wanted to stop Denny's account of his fears.

"We're going out, Herr Baby," said Lisa. "There are commissions for your lady mamma. We are to go to the patissier and——"

"Who are the pattyser?" said Baby.

"The cumfectioner," said Denny.

Baby pricked up his ears.

"We are to go to the patissier," said Lisa, "to order some cakes for Miladi for to-morrow, when Miladi's friends come to dine; and perhaps we will buy some little cake for Herr Baby's tea. Come, mine child, leave Minet, and come."

Herr Baby got up from the corner of the room where he had been embracing the cat; there was a grave look on his face, but he did not say anything till he was out on the road with Lisa. Denny was not with them; she had got leave to go a walk with Celia and the lady who came every day to give her

French lessons, which Denny thought much more grand than going out with Baby and Lisa.

"Lisa," said Baby, after a few minutes, "are mother going to have a party?"

"Not one very big party," said Lisa, "just some Miladis and some Herren—some genkelmen—to dine."

"Will it look very pitty?" asked Baby.

"Not so pretty as at *home*," said Lisa, who, now that she was away from it, of course looked upon The Manor—that was the name of "home"—as the most lovely place in the world; "there's no nice glass, no nice pretty dishes here. And François, he is so dumm—how you say 'dumm,' Herr Baby?"

"Dumm," repeated Baby, exactly copying Lisa's voice, staring up in her face.

"No, mine child, how you say it of English? Ah—I knows—*stupid*. François, he is too stupid. Peters and I, we will make the table so pretty as might be. Lisa will command some bon-bons."

"Mother will want the shiny jugs," thought poor Baby. "Him *s'ould* have brought him's pennies. Him would like to know if him has 'nuff pennies; perhaps him could go to the little girl's shop when Lisa is at the pattyser's."

But he said nothing aloud. How it was that he kept his thoughts to himself, why he had such a dislike to any one knowing what was in his mind, I cannot exactly tell; but so it was, and so it often is with very little children, even though quite frank and open by nature. Baby had, I think, a fear that mother might not like him to spend all his pennies on the shiny jugs, perhaps she might say she would pay them herself, and that would not have pleased him at all. Deep down in his honest little heart was the feeling that *he* had broken the glasses and *he* should pay for the new ones. But he said nothing to Lisa—he had never spoken of the jugs to her—mother had been "so kind," never to tell any one about what a silly little boy he had been, for mother knew that he didn't like being laughed at. *Perhaps* "they" would laugh at him now if he told about wanting to buy the shiny jugs—he wouldn't mind so much if he *had* bought them, but "'appose they wouldn't let him go to the shop to get them?" Poor little mother! She wouldn't have her pitty glasses then for the party —no, it was much best to settle it all his own self. Whom he meant by "they" I don't think Baby quite knew, he had a sort of picture in his mind of grandfather and auntie and mother all talking together, and

Celia and Fritz and Denny all joining in, and saying that "Baby was far too little to go to shops to buy things." And by the time he had thought this all over, Herr Baby glancing up—for till now he had been walking along with Lisa's hand, seeing and noticing nothing—found that they were already in the street of the town where the biggest shops were, and that Lisa was looking about to find the shop where she was to give the orders for his mother.

It was a very pretty shop indeed—Baby had never seen such a pretty shop. The cakes and bon-bons were laid out so nicely on the tables round the wall, and they were all of such pretty colours. Baby walked round and round admiring, and, I think, considering he was such a very little boy, that it was very good of him not to think of touching any of the tempting dainties. In a few minutes Lisa had ordered all she wanted—then she chose some nice biscuits and a very few little chocolate bon-bons, which she had put up in two paper parcels, and when they came out of the shop she told Herr Baby that they were for him, his mother had told her to get him something nice. Baby looked pleased, but still he seemed very grave, and Lisa began wondering what he was thinking of.

"Are you tired, mine child?" she said.

No, Herr Baby was not at all tired. He wanted to walk down the street to the other end to see all the shops, he wanted to see *all* the streets and *all* the shops before they went home. Lisa was rather amused. She had not known Herr Baby was so *very* fond of shops, she said, and it would take far too long to see them *all*. But she went to the end of that street with him, and then back again down the opposite side, and then he begged her to turn down the other street they had crossed on their way to the confectioner's, and they had gone quite to the end of *it*, Baby staring in at all the shop windows in a way that really made Lisa smile, for he looked so grave and solemn, when all of a sudden, just as Lisa was thinking of saying they must go home, Baby gave a sort of little scream and almost jumped across the street.

"Him sees it, him sees it," he cried, and when Lisa asked him what he meant, all he would say was,

"That's the little street we went down with auntie the 'nother day," and Lisa, who had forgotten all about the old shop window with the shiny glass and the blue-eyed picture, wondered why he was so eager about it.

"Is that the way we came?" she said, "I am not sure. I not quite remember."

But "him wants to go home that way," persisted Baby, and he tugged Lisa along. They passed at the other side, but Baby did not mind that. He could see across quite plainly, for the street was narrow, and there were still the glasses in the corner and the sweet baby-girl face up on the wall, looking down on them.

And after that he was quite satisfied to go quietly home; he did not speak much on the way, but Lisa was accustomed to his grave fits, and did not pay much attention to them. He only asked her one question—just as they were getting close to the Villa.

"Is it to-morrow mother's going to have all the pitty things for dinner?" he said.

"Yes, Herr Baby, and Lisa will be busy, to show François how Miladi likes everything. Herr Baby and Fräulein Denny will be goot and play peacefully in the garden to-morrow, so she can be busy," said Lisa, who was very proud of being of so much consequence.

"Yes," said Herr Baby, "him won't want you to take care of him."

After tea he got out his money-box. This he often did. He was such a careful little boy that mother let him keep his money himself, and it was a great pleasure to him to count over the different kinds of "pennies;" he called them all "pennies," brown, white, and even yellow pennies, for Baby had a pound and a ten shilling piece that had been given him on his last birthday, and that he had never been able to make up his mind how to spend. He looked at them now with great satisfaction.

"See, Denny," he said, "him has two yellow pennies, a big and a little, and free white pennies, a big and a little and a littler, and five brown pennies. Him knows there's five, for him can count up to five, 'cos five's just as old as him is going to be. See, Denny, isn't there a lot? And the yellow pennies could be turned into lots and lots of white pennies Lisa says, and the white pennies could be turned into lots of brown pennies, isn't it funny? Isn't him werry rich, Denny?"

"Yes, I suppose so," said Denny, "I really don't know. I wish you wouldn't chatter so, Baby. I can't learn my lessons."

Poor Baby! It was not often he was to blame for "chattering so." But he looked with great respect at

Denny for having lessons to do, and was not at all offended. Denny was proud of being with Celia and the new governess, but I think her pleasure was a little spoilt by finding that the new governess had no idea of taking care of a little girl who didn't do any lessons, and this evening she was rather cross at a row of French words which she had to learn to say the next morning. Baby went quietly off into the corner with his money-box, but finding it rather dull to have no one to show his pennies to, he went out of the room, which you remember was downstairs, and, opening a door which led to the kitchen, peeped about in hopes of seeing his friend Minet. He had not long to wait—Minet had a corner of her own by the kitchen wall, on the other side of which was the stove, and where she found herself almost as warm as *in* the kitchen, when Monsieur Jean-Georges objected to her company. She was curled up in this corner when she heard Baby's soft voice calling her—"Minet, Minet, pussy, pussy," and up she got, slowly and lazily, as cats do when they are half asleep, but still willingly enough, for she dearly loved Herr Baby.

"Minet," said Baby, when she appeared, and coming up to him rubbed her furry coat against his little bare legs, "Minet, dear, come and sit wif him

on the 'teps going down to the garden, and him'll tell you about his money."

But Lisa, coming by just then, said it was too cold now to sit on stone steps; for warm as it was in the day at Santino the evenings got quickly chilly.

"Us can't go back to the 'coolroom," said Baby; "Denny won't let dear Minet come there, and him must stay wif Minet, 'cos her waked up when him called her."

"Miss Denny must let you stay in the schoolroom," said Lisa. "There is no little birds there for Minet to touch."

She opened the door, and Denny was too busy with her lessons to scold.

"You will be very quiet, Herr Baby," said Lisa. So Baby and Minet went off into a corner with the money-box.

"Minet, dear," said Baby, in a low voice, "see what lots of pennies him has. Yellow pennies, and white pennies, and brown pennies."

Minet purred, naturally, for Baby was stroking her softly with one hand all the time he was holding up his pennies with the other.

"Dear Minet," said Baby, much gratified, "you is pleased that him has so many pennies. Now, Minet,

him will tell you a secret, a *gate, gate* secret, about what him's going to do wif all him's pennies."

Here Minet purred again. Baby looked round. There was no one listening. Lisa was going backwards and forwards, putting away the tea-things; Denny was still groaning and grumbling over her row of words; Baby might safely tell Minet his secret. Still he lowered his voice *so* low that certainly no one but Minet could hear. And when he left off speaking, Minet purred more than ever. Only Baby thought it just as well to say to her, before Lisa took him away up to bed, "Minet, dear, you'll be *sure* not to tell nobody;" and I suppose Minet promised, for Baby seemed quite pleased.

He woke in the morning with his head quite full of his great idea. They were not to go a regular walk that day, Lisa told him, for in the afternoon she would be busy, and Herr Baby would be good and play quietly in the garden, would he not?

"All alone?" asked Baby.

"Perhaps Miss Denny will stay, too, if Herr Baby wishes," said Lisa; "she was going again with Miss Celia, but——"

"Oh no," said Baby, "him would rather be alone, kite alone, 'cept Minet. Fritz is very good to him,

but Fritz will be at school. Fritz is never at home now 'cept Thursdays."

"No," said Lisa; "but Herr Fritz is very happy at school, and when Herr Baby is big he will go too."

"Yes," said Baby; but he didn't seem to think much what he was saying. Lisa thought he was dull about Fritz being at school—I forgot to tell you that Fritz went every day now to a very nice school in the town, where there were a few boys about his own age —but Lisa was mistaken.

That afternoon, any one passing the low hedge which at one side was all that divided the Villa garden from the road, would have seen a pretty little picture. There was Baby, seated on the grass, one arm fondly clasping Minet's neck, while with the other he firmly held the famous money-box. He was dressed in his garden blouse only, but for some reason he had his best hat on. And he kept looking about him, first towards the house and then towards the garden gate, in a funny considering sort of way.

At last he seemed to have made up his mind.

"Minet," he said to the cat, "him thinks we'll go now. 'Amember, Minet, you've *p'omised* to go wif him. If you get werry tired, Minet, him'll try to carry

There was Baby, seated on the grass, one arm fondly clasping Minet's neck, while with the other he firmly held the famous money-box.—P. 138.

you. If you could carry the money-box, and him could carry you, then it would be *kite* easy. What a pity you haven't got two more paws, that would do for hands, Minet!"

Minet purred.

"Yes, poor Minet. Nebber mind, dear; but we must be going." And closely followed by the cat, who had no idea, poor thing, of what was before her, Baby made his way down the path to the garden gate. It was open, at least not latched. Baby easily pushed it wide enough for his little self to go through, and stood, with Minet and the money-box, triumphant on the highroad.

"It were the best way, thit way," he said to himself. For there was another gate to the Villa, leading out to the upper road. But this gate was guarded by a lodge, and the "concierge," as they called the lodge-keeper, came out to open it for every one who went in and out. And "p'raps," thought Baby, "the concierge mightn't have let him through, 'cos, of course, her didn't know why him was going out alone with Minet."

So Minet and he and the money-box found themselves out on the road on their own account.

All the family was scattered that afternoon. Celia

and Denny had gone a long walk with their governess, Fritz was at school, mother and auntie had driven to see some friends a good way off, meaning to call for Fritz at his school on their way home. The servants, too, were all more busy than usual on account of the ladies and gentlemen coming to dinner. Lisa and Linley and Peters were all trying to make the strange servants understand just how they were used to have the table at home, and giving themselves a great deal more trouble than grandfather or mother would have wished had they known about it. Lisa was very clever at arranging flowers prettily, and she was so sure of Baby's quiet ways when he was left to himself, that she never gave a thought to him once she saw him safely settled in the garden with Minet. It was such a safe garden. There really was no part of it where a child could get into any trouble, for though there was a little water in the basin from which rose the fountain, it was so little, that not even Minet could have wetted much more than her paws in it. So Lisa went on quite comfortably doing the flowers and arranging the dessert in the pantry, by way of giving François a lesson, and now and then she would glance out of the window which looked on to the garden, and, seeing Baby

there with Minet, she felt quite easy. She did once say to herself,

"I wonder why Herr Baby begged so to have his best hat to-day—but he is one good child, one should please him sometimes."

I am afraid the truth was that Lisa spoilt her dear Baby a little!

After a while she looked out again. She did not see Herr Baby this time, but she did not think anything of it.

"They will have gone to play among the bushes," she said to herself, meaning by "they" Baby and Minet of course, and she went on with what she was doing, and got so interested in helping Peters to explain to François that in England people always changed the wine glasses at the end of dinner, and put clean ones for dessert, that the time went on without it ever entering her head to say to herself, "What can have become of Herr Baby?"

Mother and auntie were later than they had expected of returning from their drive. They had gone a long way, and coming back it was mostly up-hill.

"Fritz will be thinking we have forgotten him," said mother, looking at her watch, "but I told him to be sure to wait till we came. He is too little to go

home alone yet, at least till he knows his way quite well or can speak enough to ask."

"We might have told Celia and Denny to call for him, as they are out with Mademoiselle," said auntie.

Just then in turning a corner, for they were quite in the town now, auntie's eyes caught sight of the narrow street where the old curiosity shop was.

"By the by," she said, "I should so like to ask about that picture. I told you about it, you remember, May?"—May, you know, was the children's mother's name—"have we time to go that way?"

"I'm afraid not; we are late already," said mother. "I'm so sorry."

"Oh, never mind, another day will do quite well," said auntie, cheerfully.

So they drove home, quickly, just stopping a moment to pick up Fritz, who was waiting for them at the gate of his school.

If they *had* happened to go round by the old curiosity shop, how surprised they would have been; but what a great deal of trouble it would have saved them, as you shall hear.

Lisa met them as they got home, with a long story about the table and the flowers and the stupidness of

François, which mother and auntie could hardly help laughing at.

"Never mind, Lisa," said mother; "it will do very well, I am sure. Where are the children?"

"Upstairs, Miladi, taking off their things. They have just come in," said Lisa, never thinking, somehow, as mother said the "children," but that she was talking of Celia and Denny. For, somehow, in this family—in every family there are little habits of the kind—Baby was not often spoken of among "the children." They had all got so used to the name of Herr Baby, which Lisa had called him by since he was quite a wee baby, that he was seldom spoken of by any other, and often Baby himself would talk gravely about "the children," without any one seeming to think it odd.

"Upstairs, are they?" said mother. "Well, run off, Fritz, dear, and try and get some of your lessons done before tea. Mademoiselle will help you a little, I daresay, before she goes."

Off ran Fritz. He was a very good boy about his lessons, and anxious to get on well. More to please Lisa and the others than that they cared, mother and auntie went into the dining-room. They were standing looking at the pretty flowers and leaves, when suddenly Fritz put his head in at the door again.

"Lisa," he said, "where's Baby? He's not upstairs, and he's not in the garden. Linley said you told him to play there this afternoon, but he's *not* there."

Lisa started, and her face grew white.

"Mine child!" she cried. "Ah, but he must be in the garden, Master Fritz! I saw him there so happy, with the cat, just—ah, how long ago was it? Have I forgotten him for so long? He must be hiding—to play, to—how do you say?" for Lisa's English was very apt to fly away when she got frightened or upset. "Ach, where can he be?" and off darted poor Lisa.

Mother and auntie and Fritz looked at each other.

"Can he be *lost?*" said Fritz, with a very frightened face.

"Oh no, no," said auntie. "Lisa is so easily startled. But still——"

"Let us all go and look for him at once," said mother. "What a good thing poor grandfather isn't back yet!"

CHAPTER VIII.

FOUND

——"he was not there:
We searched the house, the grounds—in vain;
We searched the green in our despair,
And then we searched the house again."

IT *was* a good thing grandfather was out, for—and this was what mother was thinking of—poor grandfather, though he looked such a fine, tall, gray-haired old gentleman, was not really very strong or well. It was a great deal for him that they had all come abroad this winter, and the doctors had told mother and auntie that anything to startle or distress him might make him very ill indeed. Poor grandfather! I can't tell you what a kind, good man he was. He had stayed a great many years in India, though he would have liked dreadfully to come home, because it was "his duty" he said, and this had made him seem older than he really was, for a hot country is very

wearing out to people who are not born to it. And, though he was so fond of his grandchildren, I think if he *had* a pet among them, it was little Herr Baby. The mere idea of his tiny Raymond—Baby was named Raymond after grandfather—being lost, even for an hour or two, would have troubled him dreadfully, and thinking of this, auntie, too, repeated after mother,

"Yes, indeed, what a good thing grandfather isn't in. We *mustn't* let him know, May, till Baby's found."

They didn't stay to say anything more. Off they all set into the garden, for, though Fritz said he had looked all over, they couldn't feel sure that they might not find Baby in some corner, hiding, perhaps, for fun, even. But when they had all been round and round the garden in every direction—mother, and auntie, and Celia, and Denny, and Fritz, and Mademoiselle Lucie, and Lisa, and Linley, and Peters, and François, and, even at the end I believe, Monsieur Jean-Georges himself, and the rest of the French servants—when they had all looked, and peeped, and shouted, and whistled, and begged, and prayed Baby to come out if he was hiding, and there was no answer, then they gave it up. It was impossible that the little man could be in the garden.

Where could he be?

Fortunately there was nowhere in the garden where he could have hurt himself—no pit or pond into which he could have fallen. And it was surely impossible that any one could have come into the garden and stolen him away, as Celia, with a pale face, whispered to auntie. Where could he be, and what should they do?

Time was passing—the friends who were coming to dinner would be at the villa before long; grandfather was *sure* to appear in a few minutes. What could they do?

"We must not tell grandfather, that is certain," said auntie. "May, dear, it is very hard on you, I know, but I'll tell you how it must be. You must stay here quietly and be ready for the friends who are coming, and I will go off at once and do all, everything I can think of. Mademoiselle Lucie, you know the town, and you can tell me all about the police, and where to go to *in case* we don't find our darling at once, though I quite think we shall. I can't take you, Peters," for Peters was eagerly coming forward, "Sir Raymond would miss you, nor you, Lisa, for you must take care of the other children," at which Lisa all but broke out crying; "It was too good of

Mademoiselle Hélène to trust her; she didn't deserve it." "And François would be no good. You and I, Mademoiselle Lucie, will go at once. And you must tell grandfather that I was obliged to go out, for an hour or two, unexpectedly."

"I am afraid he will think it very strange," said mother, "but I will do my best."

Mother spoke quietly, but her face was very white.

"Do go, Nelly," she said, "as quick as you can."

And Celia and Denny, who had been thinking of bursting into tears, took example by her and auntie, and tried to look cheerful.

"Auntie," said Celia, running after her to the gate, "I'll be very good and try to comfort mother. And we'll not let grandfather think there's anything wrong. But oh, auntie dear, I *hope* you'll soon bring dear Baby safe home."

"So do I, darling," said auntie, stooping to kiss her, even though she was so hurried, and, for the first time, there was a little quiver in her voice, and Celia ran back to the others, thinking even more than before how good and brave auntie was.

They hastened down the road, auntie and little Mademoiselle Lucie, I mean. But when they had gone some little way, auntie stopped short.

"He may have gone by the other road, and we may miss him that way;" for, without thinking, auntie had hurried out by the little gate opening on to the lower road.

"I think not," said Mademoiselle Lucie, "at least the concierge would have been sure to see him, and we did ask her, and she had not seen him at all."

"To be sure," said auntie, "I forgot about the concierge."

"Besides," Mademoiselle Lucie continued, "to get to the town he must pass the way we are going, a little farther on where the two roads run together."

"To be sure," said auntie, again.

"It is to the town we are going?" asked Mademoiselle Lucie.

"Yes," said auntie, "I have an idea, but I did not like to say it to my sister for fear it should lead to nothing. There is a shop in the town where there is a picture that Baby took a great fancy to the other day. At least it was I that noticed it first, and he was so pleased with it. There was something else in the shop that he was looking at—I don't remember what—when we noticed the picture."

"Do you know where the shop is? Can we easily find it?"

"I think so; yes, I am sure I can find it," said auntie. "It is a shop of curiosities, a shop at a corner, the street is narrow."

"I know it," said Mademoiselle Lucie, "though it is not very well known. There are grander shops of curiosities which are more visited, but I know that shop, as I often pass it."

She told auntie the name of the owner of the shop, and of the street, and then auntie fixed, as they were now near the town, that she would go on alone to the shop, while Mademoiselle Lucie went to her brother, who, she hoped, would be at home at this hour, and get him to go with her to the police office, so that no time should be lost.

Auntie hurried on by herself, but though she went so fast that the easy-going peasants driving their sleepy bullocks, whom she met, looked after her in surprise, she did not, for one moment, leave off looking about her on every side, to see if by any chance she could discover the well-known little figure it would have given her such joy to see. But no. Once or twice a child in the distance made her heart beat a little quicker, but, as soon as she got near enough to see it clearly, her hopes sank again. There were very few houses on the country road leading from the villa

till one was quite in the town. So auntie thought it not worth while to ask, for, in a street of houses and shops standing close together, and people constantly passing, it was much less likely that any one would have noticed a little tot like Herr Baby making his way.

"No," said auntie to herself, "it is no use stopping to ask. The best thing I can do is to find the shop at once, and if they can tell me nothing there, to follow Mademoiselle Lucie to the police office."

And, with a deep sigh, for, somehow, every step she took farther without seeing anything of the little truant, made auntie's heart feel heavier—she hurried on again.

She soon found the wide street—the street with the dressmakers' and milliners' shops, which Fritz had not cared to look at—then she turned one corner and went on a little farther, then another, and—yes, there was the little old shop, looking just the same as the day they had all stood there so happily. Auntie had been walking very quickly, almost running, but when she saw the shop just before her she stood still—she felt *so* anxious—what should she do if she could hear nothing of Baby?

When she got to the door she stopped and looked

in; there seemed to be no one in the shop. Auntie glanced up to the side of the door where the little portrait had hung. It was gone! Could that have anything to do with Baby? auntie asked herself in a sort of puzzled way. Could Baby have thought of buying it? how much money had he? But it was stupid and foolish to stand there puzzling and wondering, instead of boldly going in to ask. Auntie took her courage in her two hands, as the saying is, and went in.

No one there; where could the owner of the shop be? The last time he had come forward at once when they were only looking in—a little-dried up old man, just the sort of person one would expect to find in such a shop, sitting in a dark corner like an old spider, watching to see what flies were passing his way. Auntie went right in without seeing any one, but she heard voices not far off, and, in her anxiety, she went forward to a door slightly open, leading into rooms behind the shop. She knocked—but for a moment no one took any notice. They were talking so eagerly inside that she had to knock again, and in the moment or two that had passed without them hearing her, she heard one or two words that made her eager to hear more.

"No, no," some one was saying, "much better go at once to the office. We may get into trouble."

"He seems so sensible," said another voice. "*I* say, better go with him and carry the things, and we shall soon see if he knows his way, and——"

Auntie *could* not wait any more. She pushed open the door and went in. There was, however, no Herr Baby to be seen, as she had almost expected there would be. There was the old man that she remembered having seen before, looking like a very startled spider this time, as he raised his two shrivelled old arms in surprise at her appearance, and beside him was a very pleasant, bright-faced, young woman, with a baby in her arms, talking, or at least looking as if she had just been talking very eagerly.

"Is he here?" said auntie, quite breathless, "my little boy, my little nephew, I mean. Is Baby here?"

The young woman looked at the old man with a sort of little nod of triumph.

"You see," she said quickly, "I said there was no need to frighten the poor darling by taking him to the police office." "Yes, Madame," she went on, turning to auntie, "the dear bébé is here—that is to say, he cannot but be the one you are looking for. I sent him out into the little garden with his cat and my

little girl, while my grandfather and I talked about what to do. I would have sent him home, I mean we would have tried to find his home, if my husband had been here, but he is away."

"And I am too feeble, Madame, as you see, to walk far," said the old man, who seemed now anxious to be very amiable.

"But you talked of taking him to the police office," said the young woman, in a low voice, "the idea! to frighten a bébé like that."

"Hush, hush," said the old man, "all was to be done for the best. You shall see him, your dear child, Madame," he went on, bustling about.

"But tell me first—a moment——" said auntie, "What did he come for? Did he buy the picture?"

"The picture," repeated the old man, "no, surely. It was the glass jugs, the little gentleman wanted, and he had his money all right—I took but the just price, Madame—I would not deceive any one."

"They are very dear to *my* mind," said the young woman, "but there—I know nothing about old things. This is not our shop, Madame—I look in in passing, to see the grandfather sometimes, that is all."

"And Baby came to buy some *jugs*, you say,"

repeated auntie. There was a confused remembrance in her mind of something Baby had said about jugs, something he had asked her to look at the day they had stood at the shop window, but which she had since forgotten. Her only idea in coming to the little old shop had been the picture. "You said he came to buy some jugs?" she said again.

"Yes, Madame," said the old man "two glass jugs —Venetian glass."

"Ah!" said auntie, and then she remembered it all—about the glass jugs that Baby had broken at home, and what he had said to her about those in the shop window being like them. "And the picture?" she said, "is it no longer there? But first, let me have my little boy. He is in the garden, you say?"

She looked round, for there was no sign of a garden. The window of the little room in which they were, looked out only on to a blank wall.

"This way, Madame," said the young woman, opening a door at the side. It led into a little dark passage, and, at the end of it, there was another door, standing open, and through this door came the sound of children's voices.

Auntie stood still a moment to listen—the first words made her smile.

"Him wants to go home now," said the well-known voice. "Little girl, why *won't* you listen? Him wants to go home, and so does Minet. Doesn't you hear?"

The little girl must have been very much puzzled, for auntie heard her trying her best, in her baby talk, to make this queer little stranger understand that they were to stay out in the garden till her mother called them in.

"Him wants to go *home*, and so does Minet," repeated poor Baby, and his voice began to quiver and shake, as if he were going to cry. Auntie could stand it no longer. She hurried out into the little garden.

"You shall go home now, Baby dear," she said. "Auntie has come to fetch you."

Baby looked up eagerly at the sound of a well-known voice. He ran to her and held up his little face for a kiss. He looked very pleased, but not at all surprised. It was one of Herr Baby's funny ways, that he almost never seemed surprised.

"Him is so glad you's come," he said. "You'll help him to carry home the shiny jugs, for Minet's *raver* tired, and him might have to carry her and the money-box. But you won't tell mother about the jugs, will you? You'll let him run in wif them

him's self, won't you, auntie? *Won't* mother be pleased?"

"But you must tell me all about it, dear," said auntie; "did you come off all alone to get the glasses? Why didn't you ask some one to come with you?"

Baby looked a little troubled.

"Him didn't come *alone*," he said. "Him told Minet, and Minet comed too, only her's werry tired. And it were for the party, auntie," he added, looking up wistfully, "Lisa said mother had no pitty jugs for her's party. And oh, auntie, p'ease do be kick, 'fear we shall be too late."

Auntie took his hand and led him back into the shop, where the old man was wrapping up the jugs with a great show of soft paper, that auntie should see how careful he was.

"Has my little boy paid you?" she asked.

"Oh yes," said Herr Baby, understanding, though she did not speak English. "See in him's money-box;" he held out the money-box with some difficulty for, having Minet under the other arm, it was not easy for him to get his hands free; "him had two yellow pennies, one big and one little, him gived the big one for the shiny jugs."

"Was that the price of the jugs?" auntie asked the man.

"No, Madame, I have the change to give the little gentleman. See here," and he held out two large silver coins, the size of crowns, which auntie took.

"I don't think the jugs are dear," she said, with a smile, turning to the young woman, who looked pleased. "And some day," she went on, "we will come to see you, and bring you some little thing for your little girl, as you have been so kind to my little boy. Come now, Baby dear, we must get home as quick as we can."

"But the little girl, the pitty little girl," said Herr Baby, "him must say good-bye to *her*."

"There she is beside you," said auntie, thinking, of course, that he meant the young woman's little girl, "say good-bye to her."

"No, no," said Baby, "him doesn't mean her. Him means the pitcher little girl, *her*," he went on, pointing to the young woman, "her gottened her down for him to see, 'cos him were trying to reach up to kiss her."

That was why the picture was no longer in the window then? Where was it? Auntie turned round as she felt Baby pulling her.

"Her's there," he said, pointing to a chair on which the picture had been set down hurriedly with the face the other way. Auntie turned it round. Dear little face! It smiled at her again with the pretty half wistful, half wise expression, which had so taken her fancy. Now it seemed to her to be saying—

"I am so glad you have found him. I knew where he was. I am so glad to have helped you to find him;" and when Baby lifted his little face to kiss, with his rosy living lips, the picture of the child, who had once been living and loving like him, I can hardly tell you the strange feeling that went through auntie's heart.

"She must have been a dear good little girl, whoever she was," she thought to herself. "It would be nice to leave a sweet feeling behind one in the world long after one is dead, such as that little face gives. I should like to have that picture. I must see about it."

But to-day there was no time to be wasted.

Auntie took Baby by the hand, persuading him to let her carry the precious jugs, as Minet and the money-box were already more than enough for him. And, even with her help, it was not so easy to manage at all, and auntie was very glad to meet Mademoiselle

Lucie a little way down the street, and get her to carry part.

Mademoiselle Lucie was delighted, as you can fancy, to see Herr Baby again. She had been coming back in great trouble to look for auntie; for very unluckily, as she thought, she had found that her brother was out, and she had not therefore gone to the police office.

"A very good thing, after all," said auntie; "it would only have been giving trouble for nothing, as we have found him."

But she said to Mademoiselle Lucie, in a low voice, to say nothing about the police before Herr Baby, as it might frighten him.

"Would it not, perhaps, be a good thing to frighten him a little?" said Mademoiselle Lucie; "he would not run off again."

Auntie shook her head.

"Not in that way," she said. "We will make him understand how he has frightened *us*. That will be the best way."

"How did he mean to get home alone, I wonder," said Mademoiselle Lucie; "how could he have carried all he had, and Minet too?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," said auntie. "How

did you mean to carry everything home, Baby dear?"

Baby looked puzzled.

"Him doesn't know," he said. "P'r'aps him thought Minet would carry some," he added, with a smile.

Auntie smiled too. Mademoiselle Lucie looked up for auntie to explain to her, for she did not understand Baby's talk any better than he did hers.

Suddenly another idea struck auntie.

"How did you manage to tell the old man in the shop what you wanted to buy?" she said.

Baby considered.

"Him sawed the pitty little girl," he said; "her was looking at the shiny glasses—*always*—her was keeping them for him. Him asked her to. Then him touched them; him climbed up on a chair in the shop and touched them, and then him showed all him's pennies to the old man; but the lady wif the baby knowed the best what him wanted. Her were very nice, but the pitty little girl were the goodest, weren't her?"

Auntie listened quietly, for Baby spoke quite gravely.

"It would be nice to have that pretty picture, wouldn't it, Baby?"

"Yes," said Baby; but he didn't look *quite* pleased. "Auntie," he said, "him doesn't like you to call her a *pitcher*. Him thinks her's a *zeal* little girl, a zeal fairy little girl. Her tookened care of the shiny glasses so nice for him, didn't her?"

And auntie smiled again.

CHAPTER IX.

"EAST OR WEST, HAME IS BEST"

"But home is home wherever it is,
When we're all together and nothing amiss."
Irish Ballad.

By this time, of course, it was quite dark. It had been quite light when auntie and Mademoiselle Lucie set off, but at Santino the darkness comes on very quickly. Poor Baby, he *would* have been in trouble if auntie had not come to look for him—that is to say if the old man and the young woman had allowed him to set off on his journey home alone. I don't think he would ever have got there, for in the dark he could not have found his way, and he certainly could never have got the shiny jugs and Minet and the money-box all home in safety!

The ladies and gentlemen who were coming to dine at the Villa had all arrived. Mother was sitting

in the drawing-room talking to them, and trying her best to look as if there was nothing the matter, to prevent grandfather finding out that there was. Poor mother, it was not very easy for her, was it? Grandfather was a good deal put out, as it was, at auntie's being so late. He, too, tried not to look cross, poor old gentleman, but any one who knew him at all well could not help seeing as he moved about the room, sometimes giving a poke to the wood fire which was burning quite brightly as it was, sometimes sharply pulling open one of the window-shutters and looking out, as if he could see anything with the light inside and the dark out of doors!—any one could see that he *was* very much put out. He sat down now and then for a minute or two and spoke very politely—for grandfather was a *very* polite old gentleman—to one or other of the stranger ladies, but even to them he could not help showing what was in his mind.

"It is very strange, really most exceedingly strange, of my eldest daughter," he said, "not to be in before this. I really feel quite ashamed of it, my dear Madam."

"But you are not uneasy, I hope," said the lady, kindly. "There cannot be anything the matter with Miss Leonard?" ("Miss Leonard" was what Fritz

called auntie's "stuck-up name," and "Lady Aylmer" was mother's.) "You don't feel uneasy about her?"

(This lady did not know there *was* anything the matter, for she was quite at the other end of the room from mother. Mother had whispered to the lady beside her, who was an old and dear friend, how frightened she was about Herr Baby, and the old lady, who was very kind and nice, was talking and smiling as much as she could to help poor mother.)

"Uneasy," said grandfather, rather sharply, and not *quite* so politely as he generally spoke, "oh no, of course I'm not *uneasy*. My daughter Helen can take care of herself. I am only very much surprised at her doing such an extraordinary thing as forgetting the hour like this."

But in his heart I fancy what the lady said did make grandfather begin to think there might be something to be uneasy about, and this made him still crosser. She was not such a sensible lady as old Mrs. Bryan in the arm-chair opposite, who chattered the more the more she saw grandfather's worried look grow worse, and the pain grew plainer on poor mother's white face.

"May," he called out at last, "I think it is non-

sense waiting dinner any longer. Tell one of the children to ring and order it up at once. Why, they're not here! Why are none of the children down, May? Everything seems at sixes and sevens."

"We are not waiting for Nelly, father dear," said mother. "I don't know why dinner isn't ready yet, but I think it can't be long. I will hurry them," and she got up to ring herself.

"But the children—why aren't they down?" said grandfather again.

Mother hesitated—

"It is rather late for them," she said. "The girls have been a long walk and are tired."

She did not know what to say, poor thing. She had not dared to let the three children come into the drawing-room, for fear their white faces and red eyes should make grandfather find out that there *was* something wrong, and indeed neither Celia, nor Denny, nor Fritz, would have been able to stay still in the room for five minutes. They were peeping out of the nursery every few seconds, running along to the end of the balcony, and straining their eyes and ears in trying to see or hear anything coming in the shape of good news.

Long, long afterwards they used to speak in the nursery, with deep breaths, of "that *terrible* evening when Herr Baby was lost."

But it was, of course, the worst for poor mother. It was bad enough in the nursery, where the tea, that nobody had cared to touch, was set out as neatly as usual on the table; the chairs drawn round, the one that Baby always had with a footstool on it—to make up for there being no high chair at the Villa—in its place, though the well-known, funny little figure was not perched on it. And Lisa, with a face swollen so that no one would have known her, fussing away to have the kettle boiling, so that her darling should have some hot tea as soon as ever he came in—for she wouldn't allow but that he would soon come in, though sad little stories kept running through Celia's and Denny's heads about children that had been lost and *never* found, or found only when it was no longer they themselves but only their poor little bodies, drowned, perhaps, or "choked in the snow," as Denny said. And she got rather cross when Celia reminded her that there was no snow, so it couldn't be *that*, any way.

All this was bad enough, but still they were free to talk about their fears, and to cry if they felt

inclined, and to keep running to the window or the door. But for poor mother, as you can fancy, it was *much* worse. There she had to sit smiling and talking as if everything were quite nice and comfortable, not only for the sake of the friends who had come to dine with them, but still more for poor grandfather's sake, who kept growing more and more fidgety and put out, and at the bottom of his heart, though he would not own it even to himself, really frightened and anxious.

At last his patience was exhausted.

"May," he said, speaking across the fireplace to mother. She was talking to the lady beside her, and did not at first hear him. "*May*," said grandfather again, and if the children had been in the room I think his voice would have made them jump, "it is using our friends very badly to keep them waiting so long for dinner. Be so good as to ring again and tell the servants we will *not* wait any longer."

Poor mother—she looked up—it was all she could do not to burst into tears!

"Yes," she said, "I will tell them."

She was half rising from her seat, whispering to the lady beside her (the lady who *did* know all about it), "I don't know *how* I shall get through dinner,"

when—what was it?—no bell had rung, there was no sound that any one else heard, what could it have been that *mother* heard? I don't know what it was, and I daresay mother herself could not have told, but something she did hear. For she stopped short, and a sort of eager look came into her eyes and a flush into her cheeks. And then the other people in the room seemed to catch the infection, and everybody else looked up to see what was coming, and in the silence a sort of fumbling was heard at the door. It only lasted a second or two, then somehow the handle turned, much more quickly than was usually the case when it was Baby's small hands that were stretching up to reach it—I rather think some one must have been behind to help him—the door opened and—oh such a funny little figure came in! You know who it was of course, but it would be very difficult to tell you exactly what he looked like. He was dressed just as he had been for playing in the garden —a little short thick jacket over his holland blouse, which was no longer very clean; his short scarlet socks and oldest boots on his legs, the bare part of which looked very red and cold, and what had been his best straw hat with part of the brim dangling down, on his curly head. But he seemed quite

pleased with himself—that was another of Herr Baby's "ways"; he always did seem quite pleased with himself, best of all, I think, when he had his oldest clothes on—he trotted into the room just as he would have trotted into the garden, even though there were a good many rather finely-dressed ladies and gentlemen sitting round—for his whole mind was filled with the thoughts of two big paper parcels which he carried in his arms. They could not have been as heavy as they were big, or else he could not possibly have carried them! And close at his heels, making him look still funnier, came Minet, very pleased, I am sure, to find herself again in sight of a fire.

Herr Baby looked round him for a moment, only for a moment, for though the lights in the room and the number of people dazzled and puzzled him a little, *he* did not need to look round for which was mother. Forgetting all about everything, except that her baby was found, up jumped mother, a rosy flush coming over her face which had looked so white and sad, pretty mother with her silvery silky dress and her sweet eyes filled with tears, and rushing over to Baby caught him up in her arms, poor little cold, tired, red-legged Herr Baby, and for a minute or so, greatly to

Forgetting all about everything, except that her baby was found, up jumped mother.—P. 170.

grandfather's surprise, she hid her face somehow among the wee man's curls without speaking.

Grandfather was surprised but not alarmed, for just behind in the open doorway stood auntie, who came quietly forward and explained to him that Baby had gone out on his own account and they had been afraid of his losing his way, that was what had kept her out so late, and she was *so* sorry. Auntie had such a nice clear simple way of speaking, grandfather's vexation seemed to melt away as he listened. He glanced at the little figure still clasped in mother's arms, and a queer look came into his eyes.

"Poor children!" he said, "poor children! May you should have told me."

But he knew why they hadn't told him. The ladies and gentlemen came round auntie to hear what she was saying. They were all very kind and very sorry and very glad. But it was difficult not to smile when a little voice was heard saying,

"Mother, p'ease put him down. Him's got somesing *so* pitty, but him's afraid of breaking them."

And sliding down to the ground, he managed somehow to set the two parcels safely on the floor, and began undoing them. They all watched him, but he didn't care, and he would let nobody help him.

He got one out at last, and held it up with a beautiful happiness in his little face.

"See, mother!" he cried, "shiny jugs! Him's got them all himself wif him's own pennies. Two! Them's for you, mother, 'cos him boked you's 'nother ones. Him founded them himself in a shop. Him's been as quick as him could, 'cos of mother's party, to make the table pitty."

"My darling," said mother, hugging him again, and when she looked up half smiling, half crying, and tried to say to the ladies and gentlemen that she hoped they would not think her silly, there were tears in some other eyes besides in hers.

But Herr Baby was quite himself.

"You *is* p'eased," he said contentedly. "Then him'll go to tea, for him's raver hungry. But p'ease put the shiny jugs on the table to make it pitty."

He held up his face for another kiss. Then grandfather came forward and in his turn lifted the little truant into his arms.

"He is tired, the poor little man," he said, looking round: "you are so kind; I should ask you to forgive our want of politeness, but I am sure you will. I will be back in a moment."

And it was grandfather himself who carried off

Herr Baby and gave him over to Lisa, weeping for joy now, as she caught her darling in her arms.

There *was* a happy tea in the nursery that night after all. Baby was very tired, but so exceedingly pleased with himself that his face grew rosy and his eyes bright, as if he had only just wakened up in the morning, as he sat at the table answering all the questions of Celia and Denny and Fritz and Lisa about his adventures. How had he found his way? How had he made the old man understand what he wanted? Hadn't he been frightened? Had he been pleased to see auntie? Had he carried Minet all the way? Oh, there were more questions than I could tell you—almost more than Herr Baby could answer; and Minet, too, came in for a share of the petting.

When they had got most of their questions answered, they all found out they were very hungry, and they set to work at their tea, and for a while there was silence in the nursery. Suddenly Baby leant his two elbows on the table and looked round.

"It were all the pitty little girl that keeped the shiny glasses for him. Her *are* so pitty."

"What little girl?" said the children, all together.

"Do you mean the young woman's little girl in the shop?"

"No," said Herr Baby, "not that kind of little girl. Him means a little girl up on the wall—a *pitcher* girl; but him thinks her are a *fairy*."

And having thus given his opinion, Baby looked round again with great satisfaction, and Celia and Denny whispered to each other that really Baby sometimes said very funny things for such a little boy!

They were all dressed as usual, and Denny and Baby went in to dessert, while Celia and Fritz waited, as became such *big* young people, in the drawing-room. Everybody was very kind to the children, and Baby, had he been any one else *but* Herr Baby, would have been spoilt by all the petting the ladies wanted to give him. But his eyes were fixed on one thing, or rather on two things, on the table, one in front of mother at one end, one in front of grandfather at the other, there they stood, two queerly-shaped glass jugs, sparkling and shining with many colours like a rainbow, filled with the brightest and clearest water which might have been drawn at a fairy well. And what pleasure shone in Baby's face as he looked at them.

"You *is* p'eased?" he said again to mother, as he bade her good-night.

It was a little difficult for mother to have to make "him" understand that much as she loved him for remembering how sorry she had been to have the first jugs broken, and how sweet she thought it of him to have got her new ones, that still he must never again think of doing such things by himself and without telling or asking any one.

She did not say anything to him that night; she could not bear to spoil his pretty pleasure, but the next day she made him understand; and Baby "p'omised" he would never again set off on his own account, or settle any plan without asking mother or auntie, or perhaps Celia, about it.

And so the end of the story of the broken jugs was quite a happy one.

* * * *

Herr Baby's birthday came in the late spring. They were all back in England by then. The old garden was no longer "lonely," for the children's voices were heard all over it, and the sunlight through the leaves flickered on to their curly heads as they ran about in delight, seeking for all their old favourite corners. The "labbits" were well and happy; Jones and Thomas had come to meet them at the railway station with broad smiles on their honest faces; all

the house looked bright and smiling, too, it had been so well rubbed up to receive them—altogether Herr Baby thought "coming back" was a very nice and happy thing, though he had enjoyed himself so much at Santino that he told Lisa he didn't think he would much mind if they *did* go there again next winter, when it began to get cold at home, as was already spoken of, as Santino had done grandfather so much good this time.

So, as I was saying, it was a very happy little man, indeed, that woke up in his "own dear little bed,"—which, wonderful to say, had not grown too small for him all the months they had been away,—on the morning of Herr Baby's fifth birthday. He could hardly stand still to be dressed, so eager was he to run off to mother's room to get her birthday kiss, and to see the presents which he knew would not have been forgotten. They turned out even prettier than he had expected; indeed, it would take me too long were I to tell you all about the beautiful box of bricks, big enough to build real houses almost, Baby thought, from grandfather, and the lovely pair of toy horses with *real* hair, in a stable, from mother, and the coachman's whip to crack at them from Fritz, and the pair of slippers Celia and Denny had worked

for him, one foot each, and the birthday cake all snowed over with sugar, and with his name on in pink, from grandfather and mother together, "'asides their other presents." It quite took Herr Baby's breath away to think all these lovely things were for him; he sat at the nursery table quite unable to eat his breakfast, something like Fritz the morning they were starting on their journey, do you remember? till Lisa persuaded him to eat, by telling him if he didn't, he would be so tired that he wouldn't enjoy his birthday at all, which made him set to work at his bread and milk. Lisa, too, had remembered the day, for she had made him the prettiest little penny purse you ever saw, knitted in bright-coloured silk, so that now he was very well off, indeed, with his "scented" purse for his gold and silver, and Lisa's one for pennies and halfpennies, and his money-box to store up the rest in when the purses were full. He had all his presents set out in a row, so that he could see them while he was eating, and just when he was at nearly the last spoonful, he was quite startled by a voice beside him, saying, "And what about *my* present, Baby, dear? Did you think I had forgotten your birthday?"

It was auntie. She had come in so quietly that

Herr Baby had not heard her. She leant over his chair, and he put his arms round her neck and kissed her.

"Him is so happy, auntie dear," he said; "him has such lots of p'esents, him never thought about your p'esent."

"Didn't you, dear?" said auntie, smiling. "Well, *I* didn't forget it—indeed, I thought of it a long time ago, as you will see. Come with me, for I see you have finished your breakfast."

Auntie took him by the hand. Baby wondered where she was going to, and he was rather surprised when she led him to his own room—that is to say, to the pretty nursery where he and Denny had their two little white beds side by side.

"Look up, Baby," said auntie.

And looking up, what do you think he saw? On the wall, at the side of his own little bed, where his eyes could see it the first thing in the morning, and the last at night, hung the picture of the blue-eyed little girl, the dear little girl of long ago, with her sweet rosy face, and queer old-fashioned white frock, smiling down at him, with the sort of wise, loving look, just as she had smiled down at him in the old shop at Santino.

"Oh, auntie, auntie!" cried Baby. But then he seemed as if he could say no more. He just stared up at the sweet little face, clasping his hands, as if he was *too* pleased to speak. Then, at last, he turned to auntie and *hugged* her.

"Oh, auntie!" he said again. "Oh, him *is* so p'eased to have him's own pitty little girl always smiling at him. Him will *always* have her, won't him, auntie?"

"I hope so, dear. She is your very own."

"Him will keep her till him is *kite* old. Him will show her to him's children and him's g'anchildren, won't him?" went on Baby solemnly.

"I hope so, dear," said auntie again, smiling at his flushed little face.

"Her *is* so pitty," said Baby. "Her is as sweet as a fairy. Auntie, him would *so* like to hear all the story about her. Couldn't you find it out, auntie?"

"Perhaps," said auntie, "or, what would be still better, perhaps the little girl will whisper it to you some night when you are asleep."

"That *would* be nice," said Baby. Then another thought struck him. "Auntie," he said, "will you ask mother to let him bring up the shiny jugs to

show them to the pitty little girl? Her would like to see them so nice, and not brokened at all wif the packing. Oh, auntie, what a bootiful birfday—him are *so* happy!"

THE END.

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